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Seventh Series, }  
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} From Beginning,  
Vol. CCXXI. }

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FROM BEGINNING  
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## CONTRIBUTIONS TO A CRITIQUE OF RUDYARD KIPLING.\*

Not long ago an English paper announced that Rudyard Kipling was said to have received the substantial honorarium of a shilling a word from a London magazine for a new story. Boston must have heard of that; for two editors of that city of culture united to pay a sum total of £500 for 50,000 words by Kipling, which makes twice as much, or two shillings a word. This instance shows that Kipling is one of the most read of English novelists of the present day; and perhaps it is no exaggeration to say that he is the favorite one. The daily papers, headed by the Times, unhesitatingly call him "the greatest English author." After the appearance of "Plain Tales from the Hills," the Daily Telegraph writes: "Who can deny his strength, his virility, his dramatic sense, his imaginative wealth, his masterful genius? He is like a young and sportive Titan, piling Pelion and Ossa in reckless ambition to scale Olympus; he is always renewing his strength like an eagle and rejoicing like a giant to run his course." Shortly after the publication of his latest verse, "The Seven Seas," we read in the Standard: "It is commonly known that Mr. Rudyard Kipling has a happy faculty for writing verse of all sorts, but what is less

understood is that he is a philosopher. He would himself be the first to disclaim being possessed of a mission, but it stands revealed in the volume published today." But even the better magazines and literary reviews are full of his praise, and see in him an "author who is destined to mark a decisive chapter in English literature." The Athenæum<sup>1</sup> and the Academy<sup>2</sup> boldly place him beside Dickens and Smollet; and all the critics, with scarcely an exception, are united in the opinion that life as it beats today in nature and humanity is truly mirrored in Kipling's works alone. According to the common judgment of the press it may be said that there is scarcely any quality essential to a good novel or a good poem which, according to the common judgment of the press, is not to be found in Kipling. Nay, the young author is even called a genius; for the Times says of his "Barrack-Room Ballads," "unmistakable genius rings in every line," and the Pall Mall Gazette adds, "and if this be not poetry, what is?" The superficial criticism now prevalent in the English papers only too often aims at discovering a genius in every new and interesting author, and because it amounts for the most part only to mere puffing, it is of

\* Translated for The Living Age by Arthur Beatty.

<sup>1</sup> Nov. 5, 1896.

<sup>2</sup> 1890, pp. 527-8.

little value in determining the worth of modern literary productions.

The fairest appreciation of Kipling is found in the *Quarterly Review*,<sup>2</sup> and a good, intelligent presentation of his stories is given by Edmund Gosse in the *Century*,<sup>4</sup> together with striking critical observations, which, however, are for the most part too laudatory. Since an excessive appreciation of an author naturally never fails to provoke a corresponding depreciation, the voices of carping critics have also made themselves heard in the English papers, most emphatically regarding him as a thing of little worth, and holding him up to the severest ridicule.<sup>3</sup> Although I have paid due regard to the significance of English criticism, I have aimed to add something new to the criticism of Kipling and his place in the modern English novel from the more impartial standpoint of a German. I have aimed before everything to arouse the lacking interest of the friends of English literature in its chief living representative.

How is it that Kipling obtained such great applause with such unheard-of rapidity? Do the excellences of his so much admired writings explain their success? Except the newspapers and journals, novels have the largest public: they are almost the only books read by everybody. No wonder, then, if such publications as rise only a little above mediocrity or even such as bring some variety to the mass of reading matter, are marked out for the moment, and greeted with loud acclaim. Novelists and poets overrun Great Britain more than any other country: their number is as the sands of the sea. And, moreover, the craze for reading is nowhere so rife as there. When the Englishman is not busy making money he is reading. When the Londoner turns from his office of an evening and

takes his seat in the 'bus, he follows the example of the other passengers and takes his book out of the brown leather bag which every one carries, just as he has done in the morning on his way to business. Even the coachman utilizes every moment of quiet on his high seat in studying the penny paper. Most frequently the first walk after dinner leads to the Public Library, where the latest newspapers and journals are looked through, and books are exchanged. On Sundays people are absorbed in the Bible and edifying works, in so far as time allows; for the day is almost wholly taken up with public worship. But every one who has really literary inclinations occupies his place daily in the reading room of the British Museum. Here the literary "feminality" of London is also well represented; and one sees with his own eyes how out of ten books the eleventh slowly but surely approaches completion. Indeed, the great majority of English "lady authors" have a perfect understanding among themselves on the matter of compilation; and they know the point of view from which to compose their works to please the public. Originality is not always needed in this process; for if there be a scarcity of the creative imagination, and if ideas should not come from books, even after persistent wallowing in them, then people go to—an agent. One of these, himself the author of popular works, declares himself ready "to assist and advise authors in the writing and publication of their own books—ideas, suggestions." These agents, who boast of their first-class connections, usually have the kindness to guarantee the success of works prepared under their auspices. Soon after the appearance of these works the enraptured author reads this flattering notice: "Everybody must read this novel with

<sup>2</sup> Vol. CLXXV.

<sup>4</sup> Vol. XLII, p. 900 ff. See also Edinburgh

Review, Vol. CLXXXVII, p. 203 (Translator).

<sup>3</sup> Free Review, I, p. 263 ff.



great interest and pleasure. It rivets the attention to the very last. The plot is out of the common. The chief characters are cleverly sketched and well contrasted. The style is sound and clear, sometimes *original*." What I quote here is not mere invention, but a word for word extract from the notice of a book which was prepared with the before-mentioned assistance, and which soon had the experience of running into a second edition. But are reviews which contain nothing more than such phrases not worse than the most disparaging criticism? To be sure, mere laudatory commonplaces are the best means of making bad books appear entirely worthless in the eyes of informed readers; but they only too often secure for them a good sale among the masses. Now of course I do not say that the majority of writers take refuge with an agent. I only say that a reference to this will offer a new reason for the astonishing productivity in England; and this fact is characteristic both of the incredible vanity and passion of the Englishwoman to see herself in print, and also shows the mercenary, conscienceless standpoint of many English *litterati*, such as these agents, who gather in so many "ideas" and "suggestions" that they may dispose of them to others for money. Moreover, the number of English journals and penny papers is so great that even the most miserable hodge-podge may always count on being acceptable somewhere or other; and even in the case of voluminous works the risk of those authors who pay for the printing is not too great, since cunning puffing is, unfortunately, the influence which chiefly determines sales in England, even in the book business. Here we have in mind the innumerable herd of novelists who are of the mediocre. The writers of the distinctively average class, as the modern literature of every people shows,

produce work which can be called neither good nor bad. They write pleasantly and skilfully, and deserve blame only because they do not tell anything of importance or interest, do not fill any gaps in our knowledge of men and things, and do not throw sufficient light on the situations and characters with which they deal. To the better class of authors, on the other hand, who have attained most importance in later years, belong Stevenson, Meredith, Rider Haggard, Marie Corelli, Barrie, Blackmore, Jerome, Russell, Helen Mathers, and a dozen others, whom the public calls "classic." In the front ranks of these, then, Rudyard Kipling has his place.

The speed with which Kipling has so suddenly come into prominence he owes not only to his talent for narration, but also to his originality. This is clearly seen in a two-fold relation—in the choice of material, and in the method of presentation. Besides the stamp of absolute novelty on his writings, two other favorable conditions have increased the enthusiasm for Kipling—his remarkable youth and his astonishing productivity. Born in Bombay, December, 1865, Rudyard Kipling's literary activity began unusually early. He held the position of assistant editor on the Lahore Civil and Military Gazette "when he was a boy fresh from school." His first verse and sketches were published in this Indian paper in 1883, and the first collection of his verse, "Departmental Ditties," was published three years later. His fame was established when, in 1886, his "Plain Tales from the Hills," soon followed by "Soldiers Three," "The Story of the Gadsbys," "In Black and White," "Under the Deodars," "The Phantom Rickshaw," and "Wee Willie Winkle," were published in an Indian Railway Library (Allahabad), and forced the English people to

\* See Academy, No. 1,282, p. 458.

exclaim, "A capital raconteur! a stronger Dickens!"

We will now explain wherein consists the originality of Kipling in the choice and treatment of his subject, as compared with the method of the contemporary English novel, because that is the chief charm of his writings; and from this we can most readily arrive at an estimate of Kipling's characteristic merits.

It is difficult for a writer whose home is bounded by the narrow limits of England to free himself of national prejudices and habits so far as to become an unprejudiced observer of nature and humanity, and to see in even the meanest of his brethren a man like unto himself and worthy of study. The Englishman leads a self-contained life: friendships are a rarity, and he lives for his business and his domestic life. As a result, in society, where the intercourse is purely formal, he does not come more closely into human relations with his equals. Above all things an intimate acquaintance with people of the lower classes is foreign to his nature; and as his aristocratic literature truly shows, he knows the masses of humanity, the common people and the army, not in their individual characteristics, but only as abstract conceptions. To be sure there exist many clearly-cut types of single characters from these circles; but these are representative of a whole class of men or often only a product of the imagination, rather than truly living persons with bones, flesh and blood, as daily life reveals them. The writings of Kipling present the sharpest contrast to this; all of them, from the first weak attempts at poetry to the latest best stories and novels, have a thoroughly unconventional, original character. Kipling had the good fortune to be reared in India, far from English society, where he lived in immediate contact with nature. "In this country where

you really see humanity—raw, brown, naked humanity—with nothing between it and the blazing sky, and only the used-up, over-handled earth under foot, the notion somehow dies away, and most people come back to simpler theories."<sup>1</sup> Nature has also endowed him with warm sympathy for this land and its inhabitants; and in these intimate relations with his environment lies the secret of his powerful realism, which has riveted the gaze of the public for a long time on his pictures exclusively, and has made all others appear colorless beside them. Kipling holds the key to the hearts of the worst and lowest men—the British soldier, the native and the outcast; for he delights in their manner of life, he loves to pass days in the barrack-room, in the opium-shops of Lahore, or in the huts of the hill-country; and the vivid impressions which he receives of the outer and inner life of these men he sketches on the spot, as it were, without attempting to lend to the picture a deliberately artistic value. The characteristic mark of all his writings is, therefore, an astonishing intimacy with the habits and experiences of individual persons which were known to the Englishman not in their individuality, but only as men with certain virtues and vices. The Briton feels himself master of the world. His ships rule the seas, his troops maintain possession of his colonies in every part of the world. But fleet and army exist in his mind only as a means of power and greatness: he knows their worth and reads glorifications of their deeds with pride. But he does not learn much more than the glory and bravery, the endurance and daring of the soldiers and sailors from these descriptions. Only single, rough marine figures are known to him from Captain Marryat's celebrated descriptions, which certainly give a better picture

<sup>1</sup> *Plain Tales.*

of Jack than the sea stories of Clark Russell or Stevenson. Kipling has done for the British soldier what Marryat has done for the British sailor. I will not maintain that Marryat's worth as a literary man is to be compared to Kipling's. The two authors have only this in common, that they introduce their countrymen to the fortunes of individuals which those great aggregates, the army and the fleet, put together, and that they show these primitive, robust figures in their unadorned nakedness, and awaken interest in their joys and sorrows. Kipling has the advantage over Stevenson, because his observations are more deeply rooted in life, and because his method of presentation is more natural; as we see, for example, in "Treasure Island," "The Wrecker," or "The Ebb Tide." Everything that expresses energy has the greatest attraction for Kipling, showing his own youthful, strong nature; and therefore his strength lies in the faithful presentation of primitive characters. Kipling does not conceal any of the failings of his characters, nor does he throw a veil over their moral degeneracy. On the contrary, the ugliness of actuality seems more characteristic and therefore more attractive. He quite intentionally disdains every attempt to seek for poetry for art's sake amid inartistic reality. If the tales and verse of Kipling had such immense success the reason for it lies in his going to the other extreme. People overlooked the lack of one factor because the other, being perceptibly absent from the average modern production, was here impressively felt. The charm of Kipling's writings therefore lies chiefly in the unusual fidelity to life and in the strong accentuation of the environment, so that everything actual may aid the intention of the author, and so that individual tales lacking tendency and ethical aim may reflect nature and

humanity. The Quarterly Review draws a parallel between Kipling and Balzac, to whom, despite his faults, French literature owes a great debt. While this realistic tendency soon produced fruit in Germany, the weak attempts to vindicate the rights of realism in the English novel have had but little success. The decisive appearance of Kipling has convinced the English people how abstractly and untruthfully their authors write, in spite of a Dickens; and how the greater number of them make the mistake of presenting "what is beautiful in nature, noble in man, pure and chaste in woman's heart," but fall into the error of overlooking the beautiful in the actual. The picture which Kipling draws of Anglo-Indian life is so full of filth and roughness that it can be presented only by an artist who despises the truth of the beautiful as such. He speaks of the frivolous life of society there as of a necessary evil from which a pleasure is to be snatched, rather than a something to be bewailed. By preference he reveals the brutal life of the soldier, the core of goodness which may be hidden in him shines forth only obscurely. And yet the author feels sympathy and friendship for his Mulvaney. His natives, in the face of their surrender to their fate, bear hatred and envy in their hearts towards the foreign interlopers. In truth, the modern Indian must present a dark picture, not wholly without sunshine, and yet, since the beauty of which nothing is deprived is unnoticed, the general effect must be very little pleasing. Indeed, Kipling himself says that it is his aim to light up "the dirty corner" of the room; but we cannot know this small part, even by the most circumstantial description, if no light is shed on the rest of the chamber. As Mr. Barrie says, there is a lack of perspective. If an artist wishes to represent a human hand, however artistic his

work, it would be incomplete if we had not the body to which it belongs for comparison. The remark of the artist that the hand alone is not the whole figure is as little satisfying as Kipling's declaration that the dirty corner is not the whole room.<sup>8</sup> Kipling, like a very modern young man, is quite at home in the narrow circle which he has chosen for himself; and since he has honesty and talent enough, he is successful within his limits in giving a most minute and detailed picture of this section. Unfortunately Kipling has been too consistently faithful to his aim of regarding the dirty corner before other considerations. The old ideas are repeated, from the earliest attempts up to the last and best stories and verse, although in new garments. The "Departmental Ditties" contain the theme presentations which deal with the life of Anglo-Indian society—the sin against the sixth commandment. This, which he calls "official sinning," is certainly so deeply rooted in human nature that the treatment of this subject necessarily exercises a peculiar charm for an artist, and must always arouse interest as well. On this subject Kipling displays a keen sense of fitness: he never treats of adultery with frivolity. The crime exists and he neither reflects on its harmful results nor dallies over scenes of sensuality. He seizes upon it as a present reality and it offers him material, like all other realities. Still further, it appears to him the essence of Indian society, and therefore he puts it in the foreground; for he seeks to lay hold not on the lovely side of life, but on the characteristic. The gravest faults have been attributed to Kipling in the *Free Review*, by E. Newman.<sup>9</sup> This writer ascribes to him a brutal, abnormal character, approaching to madness. But could a bestial nature have a deep and true understanding of children's minds and for the tenderest

aspects of them? Kipling's "His Majesty the King," "Wee Willie Winkie," and "Baa Baa Black Sheep" fill every reader with emotion and sympathy. Would we not prefer to think that the author of such words as these is himself abnormal? "The mind of the child as of the insane is sufficiently abnormal to be readily understood by Mr. Kipling." The fact against this view is that Kipling's women are commonly cold-hearted, superficial natures, like his favorite figure, the wise, humorous Mrs. Hauksbee, "the most wonderful woman in India," or the unfeeling, ambitious Maisie in "The Light That Failed." In the portrayal of noble feminine figures, both Meredith and, of earlier authors, George Eliot, are far superior, while Stevenson betrays a timidity at the introduction of women, and can never manage to be quite just to their characters. The reason why women with tender feelings are so seldom found in Kipling's stories is for the most part because he has never had the fortune to know them in his circle, and has never felt a genuine inclination for a sensitive woman. "Have ye ever fallen in love, Sorr?" Mulvaney asks him in "The Courting of Dinah Shadd." When so addressed he answered nothing, but "preserved the silence of the damned;" and his silence is rightly interpreted in the added words: "Thin I will assume that ye have not." The brutality of soldiers and officers in India doubtless stands out strongly in Kipling's stories. Has the author gone beyond the truth? The error is perhaps only in the great clearness with which the nature of that brutality is shown. In all men there still lurks something of the brute; more in some, less in others. Never before in English literature has any one so boldly sought to convince us that even rough men are yet so far removed from the brute that it can live familiarly with them.

<sup>8</sup> *Contemporary Review*, Vol. LIX, p. 364 ff.

<sup>9</sup> p. 236.

Kipling tells frivolous adventures, and yet we listen to him as if they were heroic deeds, which we should have liked to experience. He carouses with his soldiers and laughs at their jests, and while we know them to be rough we share his pleasures in them. The civil service officer, who is cut off from all intercourse with men, gives himself up in despair to the feeling of desolation, until he finds relief and consolation in drunkenness; and we pity him and are not terrified at the frightful irregularities to which vice leads him. We must not forget that India is not a civilized state in the European sense. The men who are sent there, separated from home and friends, must gradually take on something of the rough character of their environment. Evil tendencies there certainly degenerate more easily into vices. We have to judge the morality of such a country as if it formed a world by itself. Kipling by his candor has done a good work, in so far as the Englishman is in the habit of ignoring the existence of vice even when he sees it with his own eyes; as he, on the other hand, makes the stupid blunder of overlooking virtue when he meets it. That he takes account of English prudery at the expense of naturalness is as praiseworthy as the fact that his naturalness has a gross rawness is blameworthy. It is true that he does not pay full tribute to chastity; it is untrue that he is ever vulgar. Above all it must not be forgotten that in the variegated Indian life, even as Kipling represents it, there is hidden a large share of poetry and romance. Every one of his tales is proof of his own words: "Some people say that there is no romance in India. Those people are wrong. Our lives hold quite as much romance as is good for us. Sometimes more."

But the eager welcome that Kipling's writings have called forth is not to be

ascribed to his sturdy realism alone, but also to the special department from which his materials are taken. With a few exceptions, his stories deal with Anglo-Indian life. The name of India arouses the interest of the Englishman. His queen is Empress of this powerful realm. He has conquered it in fierce battles, under generals whose statues adorn the Metropolis. He knows that this land has a wild natural beauty, that dangers from climate, men and wild beasts threaten his brother. He owes to India immeasurable wealth, and his best troops go there to maintain possession. But what most interests him is the peculiar Anglo-Indian life in all its variety among the soldiers and the natives and in society, which has first been revealed to him by the realistic sketches of Kipling. "India has furnished him with an ample field, which, in spite of some earlier sketches, had remained, until the appearance of the "Plain Tales," almost as untrodden as the Highlands were when Sir Walter Scott drew the curtain from before that weird landscape in *Waverley*."<sup>10</sup> All classes of Englishmen were interested. High and low seized eagerly upon these fresh, lively descriptions, which for the first time brought near to their imagination the theatre of British greatness in the East, and made clear to them the contrast between modern India and the poetic wonderland of the past. "It is not a golden country, though poets have sung otherwise. There men die with great swiftness, and those who live suffer many and curious things."<sup>11</sup> These "curious things" have a greater interest than eastern fables and the vanished glories of the old Moguls. Englishmen showed their gratitude to the author who gave them a deep insight into the present circumstances of their countrymen and shed light on their relations to one another and to the natives. For many whose rela-

<sup>10</sup> Quarterly Review, Vol. CLXXV, p. 34.

<sup>11</sup> Incarnation of Krishna Mulvaney.



tives live in India as soldiers, officers, farmers, and merchants, Kipling's stories must have an almost personal interest; for their friends must often have found themselves in similar situations. More than this, there is the great variety of the subjects dealt with. "These tales," says Kipling in the introduction to his second most important collection of sketches, "Life's Handicap," "have been collected from all places, and all sorts of people, from priests in the Chubara, from Ala Yar the carver, Jiwn the carpenter, nameless men on steamers and trains round the world, women spinning outside their cottages in the twilight, officers and gentlemen now dead and buried, and a few, but these are my very best, my father gave me;" and there is another circumstance, more worthy of note, which has done very much to heighten the enthusiasm for Kipling—his feeling for English nationality, which is particularly expressed in the sailor stories and songs. These sketches and poems, so remarkable in many ways, must arouse in the breast of every Englishman the pleasing thought that they are written by a man who has the proud consciousness of belonging to the greatest nation in the world. The strange view of the *Quarterly Review* that his patriotism is mere policy seems irreconcilable with his honorable character. That part of the stories that deal with Anglo-Indian life falls naturally into the following groups: the British soldier, the civil service officer, society, the native and the child in India. We shall go more particularly into the contents of these in a separate article.

Just now we observed that Kipling made a doubly happy stroke in the choice of his material, by opening the way for a new direction of taste, and in awakening the attention and sympathy of his countrymen for this theme which he has made his own. But had

he followed contemporary methods in the treatment of these subjects, the success of his writings would have been very much less. A change in the manner of presentation and in style showed itself to be very necessary, because the novels of late years had shown a uniform mediocrity in these things as well. Two extremes made themselves unpleasantly felt: either an endless long-windedness wearied the reader, or an affected brevity—the "scrappy, snappy style"—which attempted to bring about powerful effects by deliberated surprises, fatigued the imagination by over stimulation. English novels, even by the greatest authors, lay too much stress on side-issues; superfluity of beauty in detail may destroy the uniformity and the continuity of flow. Walter Scott goes too much into details in his descriptions of nature and in his portraits. Charles Dickens tries the patience of the reader by his long talks on hard problems. Of the modern novelists Stevenson is most praised as the one who writes the purest English and the best style. But he is thoroughly ornate, and directs the attention from the main issue and concentrates it too much on the incidental, through his love for external adornments. The common wares which of late years have been flooding the market, show so distinct a tendency to dally over the obvious or to idly dissect the simplest processes and to give detailed descriptions of everyday happenings, that the little merit which these hodge-podges have in themselves is entirely based on trivialities and commonplaces. But how can we expect a man to reproduce for us a clear picture of nature and humanity when he himself has received vague and uncertain impressions from the outer world? Kipling's works do not share in this lack: he has the right word for the right thing. What he clearly receives he reproduces in short sentences with freshness and life. We



see what he depicts. Byron's saying, "Words are things," which does not always find substantiation, is fully true of Kipling. Often substantive and verb is enough to put the concrete object clearly before our eyes or to allow us to think and experience the abstract conception in the intended meaning. If an adjective is used, it has the power to give the color necessary to the individuality of the object. As he says in "A Song of the English," "Through the naked words and mean May you see the truth between." It is his aim to so clearly mirror received impressions that the effect is felt by the reader as forcibly as by himself. And in fact he unites an admirable gift of observation with extraordinary skill in presenting the picture with such clearness that every feature of the original is contained in it. Yet he does not lose himself in details which obliterate the character of the thing. His English contemporaries will mention every tree, every stone, almost every blade of grass, to present a landscape. If they are depicting a person, they are not satisfied with a circumstantial description of his appearance, demeanor, dress, countenance, without also bringing in, as worthy of consideration, the buttons and seams of his coat as well.

In many passages of Kipling there is a fine blending of objectivity and poetry.<sup>22</sup> An example of this is found in "The City of Dreadful Night": "The witchery of the moonlight was everywhere; and the world was horribly changed. . . . Overhead blazed the unwinking eye of the moon. . . . Straight on as a bar of polished steel ran the road to the City of Dreadful Night; and on either side of the road lay corpses on beds in fantastic attitudes—one hundred and seventy bodies of men. Some shrouded all in white with bound-up mouths;

some naked and black as ebony in the strong light; and one that lay face upwards with dropped jaw, faraway from the others—silvery white and ashen gray." But even what is a pure creation of the fancy Kipling sees so distinctly that, for example, we might accept the marvellous in the "Ride of Morrowble" as actual fact. In the wish to reproduce an impression in its original nature, so that the reader may feel it with the same immediate power, Kipling often allows himself to do violence to the rules of correct style. The fault of this method of procedure is that he violates the sentence-structure and so leaves grammar out of consideration. We meet with frequent telegram-like, short, broken-off sentences, from which the subject or predicate is lacking. It is hard to see any advantage in such sentences as, "Sometimes more," "But nothing else," etc., which hardly deserve the name of sentences; and to praise the author for such things by naming him "the ungrammatical Byron" is nonsense. Just as disturbing are the scattered, short remarks which contain raw, unripe judgments, as, "This is wrong," "India is the one place in the world where a man can do as he pleases," etc. Superlatives, too, are applied too lavishly. Kipling seems to have an excessive self-consciousness; and his so celebrated virility shows its harmful results in leading him to overlook the teaching which great models have given. Kipling would not have damaged his originality if he had observed moderation in expression, and had not permitted himself to be carried away by the vivacity of the subject. Art is not to be taught, but technical perfection is essential to the painter, sculptor, or actor, and in the same way authors can learn to see their own failings from the beauty of the works of the great masters. Scott and Dickens read the classic authors with the greatest zeal, and strove to

<sup>22</sup> e. g. in *Namgay Doola*, *Through the Fire*, etc. (*Life's Handicap*.)

write in an equable flow, avoiding any ruggedness, any violence, which would injure the smoothness of the style. Because strength and intensity mean everything to Kipling he often forgets that the foundation of style is grammatical correctness. Wherever the British soldier or children speak, the broken style is especially fitting, but in many sketches in "Plain Tales" a long succession of short sentences becomes unbeautiful, and a great number of similar beginnings, the same noun or pronoun, adds an unlovely uniformity. It is different in the longer stories. In the beautiful and somewhat long stories in "Life's Handicap," as "Without Benefit of Clergy," "The Head of the District," "The Man Who Was," or in "The Man Who Would Be King"—in short in all which are noteworthy because of their content and artistic worth—the style is flowing, simple and original. In these stories, which deal for the most part with native life and which show great skill in their structure, he reveals a real superiority when compared with contemporary English novelists. In the sharpest contrast to his unadorned manner of narration stands, perhaps, Stevenson's style, whose sentences we can see are shaped, filed, and elaborated with such care. Stevenson himself expressly says in his readable essay, "A College Magazine," that he carried forward his style to perfection only through unwearied practice. The reflective manner of a George Meredith or of a Marie Corelli will serve as a second antithesis. The novels of these writers are doubtless more thoughtful; but the long-drawn moralizing sends the reader to sleep. In Kipling everything rings simple, fresh, and strong, affecting fancy and sense with equal power. I have mentioned examples of this, and may refer to the wild ride in "False Dawn." The choice of words in that story is masterly. The despair of the maiden is paint-

ed in her cry of anguish; we feel the scorn of death which makes her urge her horse into the swiftest gallop in despite of storm, darkness and the treacherous ground; we feel the fury of the dust-devil and tempest, and see the garments of the daring rider fluttering back round the sides of her gray steed.

Because Kipling has kept so sternly to reality he has been called a photographer. That is an unfortunate comparison. Photography shows every line, even the most insignificant, while Kipling's pictures give only the really characteristic features. His pictures are not primarily and fundamentally works of art, because he is accustomed to project them only with a few rough strokes of the pencil, which only secures the sharp contours and for the most part entirely neglects the soft and gradual transitions. Thus their defect is the want of finish; but he has not wished to give anything else. His stories are for the most part only a few pages in length, so that great brevity is demanded. The first sentences in the introduction contain everything necessary to make the reader acquainted with the relations of the persons, their appearance and character. The verses which stand as mottoes are so appropriately chosen that they call up beforehand the right toning, with a single stroke. Nearly every one of the short sketches in "Plain Tales" is a notable example of this. The strophe which forms the introduction to "The Brockenhorst Divorce Case" gives in a few words the fundamental note of the story, the reason for the divorce and the sentiments of the husband:

In the day-time when she moved about  
me,  
In the night when she was sleeping  
at my side,—  
I was wearied, I was wearied of her  
presence,  
Day by day I grew to hate her—  
Would God that she or I had died!

In order to fetter the attention of the reader on the theme beforehand, Kipling often begins with a sentence which contains a general truth, to which the following special case forms an exception, as in "In the Error, or A Germ Destroyer." The represented events gain very much in probability because the author plays the role of the quietly observing confidant, friend or helper. "I am only the chorus that comes in at the end to explain things," he says of himself in "In the House of Suddhoo." The soldiers tell their experiences themselves, or the author repeats them literally as he has heard them from themselves. These stories possess peculiar dramatic power. Life is gained by the dialogue form and by the use of dialect. Both of these means help the character-drawing in an extraordinary degree. Any one who has read "Soldiers Three" will never forget Mulvaney the Irishman, Learoyd the Yorkshireman, and Ortheris the Cockney: they are living types of the British soldier, such as have never before been known. By the skilful use of the dialogue Kipling, as is universally recognized, has won for himself a peculiar distinction. Besides, he seems to be master of these three dialects; at least his slang and Cockney vocabulary show such richness that it is a proof of how far he has penetrated into the habits of thought of his companions through his intercourse with them. Whether he makes the finer distinctions in the three dialects can be judged of course only by the initiated. Certainly he may have made occasional mistakes, as the *Quarterly Review* tries to show: but that is not a serious reproach against a writer. It is enough if he has hit upon the right tone and the distinctive peculiarities of speech. The reading is, indeed, made very much more difficult for the foreigner, and troublesome for the Englishman as well. But we get accustomed to it

more quickly than to the peculiarities of the Scottish dialect; and it is fundamentally false to maintain that the worth of these tales would have been greater if literary English had been exclusively employed. On the contrary, it is the merit of Kipling to have made the first successful attempt to introduce the rough speech of the common British soldier into literature. In spite of the fact that many pages are overburdened with the crudest dialectal expressions, with oaths and barbarous idioms, yet the reader may rejoice that this speech, whose sounds often ring in his ear, can be expressive of the very aim of the artist. Some of the "Barrack-Room Ballads" owe their witchery of tone and their great liveliness not only to their stirring rhythm, but also to their dialectal coloring. If this were taken from them the poetic atmosphere would be clouded; and, worse still, the spirit of the soldier-nature in which they are conceived would be destroyed. The speech of Tommy Atkins with the missing "h" at the beginning of words and the suppressed "g" in the participial ending, has a homely, popular ring which is so essential to these songs, just as the dialectal peculiarities heighten the charm of folk-songs or dialectal poems.

Whether Kipling will win an enduring position in the history of English literature cannot be decided with certainty. But his undoubted merit is that, unlike any of the modern English novelists, he writes powerfully and unaffectedly, free from all conventional and traditional influences, and is endowed with conspicuous narrative talent. He succeeds everywhere in giving the characteristic side of life, which he has learned in the most varied of homes and on long journeys in different parts of the world; and in putting old things in a new light; for he has sharp eyes to see, understanding to reflect, and conscience to prevent him from dis-

figuring anything. If his conception of life seems somewhat superficial, and if rash judgments show too strong self-consciousness at times, we may count it to his youth. Without doubt it is a great feat for an Englishman, who does homage to the words, "The pleasant is permitted," to act freely and openly in life; and it is a still greater feat to honestly bring this into his writings. English literature thus possesses in Kipling the first naturalistic author, whom his people has received with almost unan-

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imous applause in spite of the actual exclusion of the moral in his works; for the tone of his narrative is so naïve and poetic that even English sensibility can delight in it undisturbed.<sup>13</sup> However exaggerated it would be to call Kipling a sun, a Phœbus, it would be equally unjustifiable to compare him to a meteor, which rises in flames and is then forever quenched in darkness. He is a star, which has been shining brightly for twelve years, and which is as yet in no wise near its setting.

F. Gratz.

### THE FRENCH JUDICIAL SYSTEM.

France is the country that has the greatest number of judges, but it is not, perhaps, the one where justice is dispensed in the best manner. The numerous and varied jurisdictions existing there have not all come down from ancient times, several of them being of comparatively recent creation and, in fact, not yet a century old. When the narrow-minded men who brought about the Great Revolution found themselves in power, they attempted to rebuild, on the foundation of what they called their principles, the judicial edifice they had upset. They put order in place of the chaos that had been caused. Impromptu courts were no longer held in the streets, to fill the gutters with blood, but even after the repeal of the *loi des suspects* there were still some special tribunals in existence. It was necessary to rearrange the scattered elements of the old judicial system and the new, reconstitute the legal organizations, invest them with authority, define their powers, and surround

them with the prestige that attaches to a brilliant staff of judges. This was not the work of a single day, and before its completion more than one of the principles laid down by the Revolution had disappeared. What has become of them? They are still being sought for to-day, and this laborious and barren pursuit revives from time to time some of those liberty-killing ideas that a sanguinary despotism put into practice not very long ago.

It was under the Consulate that the French judicial system took its present form. A law was enacted on the 24th of August, 1790, establishing a civil court in each district, and judges for them were elected. This law provided a justice of the peace for each canton (sub-division of a district), and abolished the supreme courts which had hitherto had appellate powers. The right to hear appeals was entrusted to the district courts, and they exercised it one towards another. The administration of justice in criminal cases was, a little later, given a special form in the criminal courts of the *départements*. Lastly, above all the

<sup>13</sup> See A. Brandl in *Cosmopolis*, Vol. VI., pp. 579 ff., for a valuable essay.

other jurisdictions, civil and commercial, there was placed a Supreme Court, the Court of Cassation. This somewhat complicated system did not endure very long. It was replaced by another which proved but little more lasting. Finally, the law of the 7 Ventôse, an VIII (27th of February, 1800) laid down the permanent lines of our judicial institutions, and fixed in a firmer manner the limits of the various jurisdictions. The peace courts (*justices de paix*), the commercial courts, the criminal courts, and the Court of Cassation, were maintained. A civil court of first instance was allotted to each district, and there were created twenty-nine upper courts, which have successively been called "Imperial Courts," "Royal Courts," and "Courts of Appeal." In addition to these various tribunals, several others have been brought into existence. We will give a brief summary of the whole institution and the limits of the different jurisdictions.

The civil judicature comprises, beginning at the top— (1) the Court of Cassation; (2) the Courts of Appeal; (3) the Assize or Criminal Courts; (4) the Tribunals of First Instance; (5) the Commercial Courts; (6) the Maritime Courts, appeals from which are heard by the Courts of Appeal; (7) the Peace Courts; (8) the Councils of Experts (*Conseils des prudhommes*), instituted under the Second Empire to adjust disputes about wages between masters and workmen. This is not all, for we have to add what is called the "administrative" judicature, which is composed of *Conseils de Préfecture*, as courts of first instance, and the *Conseil d'Etat* as supreme and appeal court. These deal with the differences that arise between private individuals and the State with regard to State or local taxation, irregularities committed by government employees, and so forth. They are thus a rather original

kind of tribunal, where the State is at once judge and party in the suit. Administrative works and commentaries declare this system to be necessary, and strive at great length to demonstrate this. They might add that a system more calculated to operate unfairly could not be devised. These courts rarely decide a case according to its merits, and take little trouble to get at the truth. It would be easy for us to cite instances in point, if this were within the scope of our article.

Alongside these civil and administrative jurisdictions there is another, closely allied to the former. We refer to the machinery for dealing with criminal cases. We will pass over this branch of the subject, although we think it is salutary to direct a stream of light now and then upon the manner in which this machinery works. What militates against the rendering of justice in France is that every culprit is *ipso facto* held in suspicion and looked upon as guilty. This wrong tendency is not the result of intentional ill-will, which would be odious, but is the consequence of a badly ordered judicial system.

There are two other jurisdictions to be spoken of—the military and the naval; both of which have a military character. They were long considered most worthy of esteem, respect, and even admiration. One must have attended a sitting of a court-martial before which a simple soldier is brought for a proved and confessed crime in order to have an idea of the extreme care with which the proceedings are conducted. Everything that may strengthen the defence is heard with benevolent attention, and when sentence is passed it is difficult not to be moved by the way in which it is done. Military law is hard: in every line one finds the cruel word *death*; but at the fatal moment hearts soften, and the president's voice, so steady on pa-



rade, trembles and falters in a way that shows what it costs him to pronounce the sentence that is to banish a member of the family. Harsh as military law is, it seems less so than civil law. The private soldier is tried by officers, but the court also comprises a man belonging to the ranks, and it is he who speaks first when the time arrives to decide the culprit's fate. As a matter of fact, military executions are very rare in France. There has not been a single one during the last ten years, the death sentence having always been commuted. At the present moment there is a bill before Parliament for relaxing the rigors of military law. It is even proposed to abolish courts-martial altogether. It is always pleasant to see a harsh law made less so, but there is a difference between amendment and repeal. Perhaps an attempt will be made to dispense with courts-martial in peace time. The present method of recruiting the French army leads naturally enough to this reform. Step by step, the army itself may in course of time be got rid of. The change would probably be welcome to a section of the nation, especially to those people who look upon a man's sojourn in the barracks as a burdensome thing and a waste of time. It would, at any rate, set free a certain amount of money, which could be used for hiring ready-made soldiers when needed. For our part, we think that the professional soldier is the only genuine one. To express this opinion may seem like returning to the ideas of the Middle Ages, whereas we know that the armed-nation system is quite a new thing that has nothing in common with past and barbarous times.

At present, there are in France three thousand, two hundred and fifty-eight civil courts, not including the commercial courts, the judges of which are unpaid, nor the councils of

experts. To this number must be added one court of appeal, sixteen courts of first instance, and one hundred and two peace courts (*justices de paix*) in Algeria, making altogether three thousand three hundred and seventy-seven tribunals for dispensing justice. We might also add the police courts that exist in each district, but whose powers are confined to punishing trivial offences. Taking no notice of these, nor of the peace courts, which are little more than conciliation courts, or offices dealing only with small disputes about boundaries, the placing of seals on the property of deceased persons, and matters of like character, and which are incompetent in cases involving more than three hundred francs, we find that there are four hundred and three courts sitting regularly, and forming the actual judicial body. How many judges do these courts employ? A few provincial tribunals have only three; others have five, and some still more, distributed among several courts. Thus, at Paris there are forty-eight judges, composing nine courts, twelve vice-presidents and one president, whose post is a high one. Besides these sixty-one regular judges, there are a number of substitutes (*juges suppléants*), who await their turn to become full-fledged judges. The inquiring judges (*juges d'instruction*) are twenty-two in number; their important duties will be described further on. This completes the list of judges, or what is called the *magistrature assise*. They have in front of them the *magistrature debout*, consisting, at Paris, of the *Procureur*, or Public Prosecutor, and thirty-nine deputies. We leave out the clerks of the court and the minor employees. From this enumeration it is seen that, for Paris alone, there are sixty-one judges to hear and decide cases, twenty-two who examine, and thirty-one whose duty it is to demand



conviction or acquittal in the name of the law. The number for all France, the capital and Algeria included, is three hundred and seventy-five presidents, sixty-five vice-presidents, four hundred and eleven examining judges, and six hundred and eighty-seven ordinary judges. The *magistrature debout* numbers three hundred and seventy-five public prosecutors and two hundred and ninety-eight assistants.

The twenty-six appeal courts of France and the court at Algiers give employment to twenty-seven chief justices, sixty-three presiding judges or vice-presidents, twenty-seven public prosecutors, sixty-one attorneys-general, fifty-nine assistants, and four hundred and fifty-one councillors. Above the courts of appeal, the name of which indicates their attributions, there is the Court of Cassation, with its high and somewhat hazy duties of interpreter of the laws. This court sits at Paris, on the perilous borders of politics. The appeal courts and the Court of Cassation form what is termed the *haute magistrature*.

Criminal cases are not dealt with in France by a distinct body of judges, as in many other countries. The question of guilt or innocence is submitted to a jury, the same as in England. The presiding judge at assizes is always a counsellor of the appeal court of the district; he is accompanied by two assessors, who are also counsellors if the assizes are held in the town where the appeal court sits, but who can be chosen from among the judges of first instance if they are held in some other place. The names of the jurymen are drawn by lot from lists compiled beforehand by the public prosecutor and the chief justice. Although the rights of the accused are not so well protected in France as in England, they are nevertheless sufficiently so to leave scope for the ex-

ercise of leniency when deserved. In fact, certain juries have carried indulgence to such a point as to excite public opinion. Most of the cases known as *crimes passionnels*—that is to say, crimes arising from that one of the passions which most deeply stirs man's heart once it springs up therein—result in an acquittal, to the distress of the rigidly virtuous judge, but the delight of every tender soul. Moreover, legislation has considerably relaxed the precautions formerly taken to insure the conviction of the guilty. The judge's summing-up, for instance, which was often a veritable speech for the prosecution instead of being, as the law intended, an impartial review of the case for and against, has been done away with, and its pernicious effect is no longer felt. We cannot deny that the cause of justice has gained thereby.

It is difficult to see why three judges should be required for passing sentence after the verdict has been rendered. The law, by its numerous and subtle distinctions, has made this duty very simple. We do not conceive it possible that a good president, and consequently a good judge, can err in performing this task, and it would seem, therefore, that the two assessors have been given him in order to guard against slips and oversights. Criminal procedure is so full of pitfalls that perhaps three heads are not too many for this purpose. The Court of Cassation is there on the watch, and does not always want a good reason for quashing a sentence regularly passed and based on solid grounds.

The Court of Cassation has only a limited staff. There is a chief justice and a public prosecutor, who are on an equal footing, three presiding judges, forty-five counsellors, and six attorneys-general. All of them receive higher salaries than the other members of the magistracy. They sit in a

sumptuous court, decorated by the best modern painters. When they demand it, they have a guard of picked soldiers. They are dressed in red robes and ermine mantles. All of them try to appear grave, and the majority really are so. The advocates who plead before them form a body apart from the rest of the bar, and in jurisprudence the decrees rendered within those sacred walls have almost the weight of law, despite the fact that they are often contradictory. According to circumstances, the public opinion of the moment, or the ups and downs of politics, white becomes black and black changes to white on the same questions, and the name this court bears invests it with the necessary authority to quash its own decisions. This is the great task in which it is engaged at the present juncture. The matter deserves particular mention. The Criminal Chamber, which, like each of the two Civil Chambers, has a president and fifteen members, was recently entrusted, surreptitiously and against the opinion of the judicial advisers of the Minister of Justice, with the revision of the Dreyfus trial. It decided to conduct the inquiry with closed doors. At the same time ex-Lieutenant-Colonel Picquart, who, together with a civilian, had already been brought before a civil court to answer for the *misdeemeanour* of communicating secret documents to outsiders, was prosecuted before a court-martial for the *crime* of forgery and for divulging secrets concerning the national defences. It is needful to state, in order to make the subject clear, that French law does not allow a soldier who is accused jointly with a civilian to be tried by a military court. It is the civil courts that have jurisdiction in such cases: *cedant arma togæ*. Therefore, as regards the *misdeemeanour* of communicating secret papers, the proper and legal course was

taken in prosecuting Colonel Picquart before a civil court, the one competent in misdemeanor cases. On the other hand, as he alone was accused of the crime of forgery and of having divulged professional secrets, he was only amenable to the military tribunals, and it was on this charge that he was arrested and sent before a court-martial. Moreover, the Court of Cassation had decided in this sense in another episode of the same affair.

If, in the above remarks, we have managed to throw a little light upon the preliminaries of the case, the reader will have no trouble in understanding what follows. M. Picquart is the object of a charge which touches himself alone. After the necessary previous inquiry, he is going to be tried by his peers. If he is innocent, this will be shown in the light of day. He is afraid to meet his trial, and applies to the Court of Cassation for a settlement of judges. This signifies that he raises the question of the possibility of a dispute between the civil tribunal and the court-martial. Now the conflict is non-existent, and this for two reasons: there is no possible connection between the proceedings in the civil court and those pending before the court-martial; the civil case is one of *misdeemeanour* in which a civilian (a barrister) is also involved, whereas the military prosecution is for a *crime* committed by an officer alone. The civil case, in so far as it is one of misdemeanor, is purely a civil court case; the military case is one of a crime, or rather a series of crimes, to be answered for before the criminal jurisdiction, and—the culprit being alone—before the *military* criminal jurisdiction. If the charge could be invested with a civil character, it would have to be heard by the Assize Court. It is evident that there is no connection between the two cases, no clashing of jurisdictions, and conse-

quently that there was no ground for applying for a choice of judges to be made, when these judges have to deal with two distinct prosecutions, one civil and the other military, one for a misdemeanor and the other for a crime. The president of the tribunal himself has said so, without being obliged; the same thing is affirmed by nine-tenths of the leading barristers, by the members of both Civil Chambers of the Court of Cassation, and even by the judges who form the minority in the Criminal Chamber. Yet the Criminal Chamber has declared Picquart's request to be well founded, and, without ascertaining whether there really are two tribunals in conflict, has decided that such is the case and that the two prosecutions are allied. A character in a comedy says: "*Cette molle est-elle à nous? Elle doit être à nous.*" In this strange affair, which is unbalancing weak minds and exciting even the calmest ones, we begin to see the germs of a fresh revolution—one that may have graver consequences than people imagine. Now that the Court of Cassation is caught in the maze of procedures, we wonder how it will get out without straining the law and outraging common sense. It cannot legally prolong the respite it has granted Picquart, in the exercise of its sovereign power, nor can it send the culprit before any other jurisdiction than the competent one.

While Colonel Henry's suicide, after the confession of his forgeries, disturbed certain minds, the resignation of M. Quesnay de Beaurepaire resounded like a thunder-clap. Here it is necessary to go into some detail, in order to make the matter clear. Since the middle of December rumors had circulated regarding several members of the Criminal Chamber. Three in particular were accused of concerting with the witness Picquart as to the evidence he should give, with a view

of weakening the testimony of the generals. M. de Beaurepaire had heard one of the judges utter some suspicious words, and these were quoted in a number of newspapers. Certain acts were alleged. The Minister of Justice ordered an inquiry, the real object of which was to hide the gravity of these incidents, and it was after this investigation that M. de Beaurepaire, president of one of the three Chambers of the Court of Cassation, resigned his post. As one of the presiding justices of the High Court, he occupied the most elevated position in the French judicial world next to the First President and the Attorney-General. His salary was 25,000 francs per annum, and he has no private fortune. He passes for a man of great learning and talent. Now that he is free from official trammels he proclaims from the housetops the unworthiness of five or six of the judges belonging to the Criminal Chamber, and promises some startling disclosures about the Panama case, in which he played a prominent part. Thus we have anarchy in the administration of justice added to anarchy in the public mind, in Parliament, and in the Government from top to bottom.

In a debate on the investigation mentioned above, a Republican member of the Chamber of Deputies went so far as to call the three legal luminaries who were conducting the Dreyfus inquiry a *trio of rascals*, and the Minister of Justice was called upon to institute a second and more searching investigation of the charges brought against the Criminal Chamber. This further examination was made by Chief Justice Mazeau and the two senior members of the Court of Cassation—three men who are respectable and respected. They came to the conclusion that M. de Beaurepaire's accusations were well founded. The in-

quiry opened by the Criminal Chamber as to whether there was ground for revising the Dreyfus trial had been vitiated from the very outset. The presiding judge, M. Loew, was, by his ties, his origin, and his family connections, unfitted for conducting the examination of witnesses impartially. To lay the case before the Chamber he had selected one of its minor members, M. Bard, who was known as having already made up his mind about it, and as having had certain confabulations with the witness Picquart. In the next place there was M. Manau, the Public Prosecutor, whose speech was a veritable pleading in the condemned man's favor. Both these speeches contained errors, misquotations and falsehoods. Moreover, numerous witnesses proved that their interrogatories had been conducted with the evident intention of preventing the truth from coming out. Thus a dilemma presented itself. It was necessary either to prosecute M. Quesnay de Beaurepaire for slander before the Assize Court, where he would have the right to produce his proofs, or to adopt the view of the committee of inquiry, which was that the task of deciding whether or not the Dreyfus trial shall be revised should be entrusted to the whole Court of Cassation, *all three Chambers united.*

Laid with great vigor before the Chamber of Deputies, the question assumed a political character, but of quite a different color from that which M. Brisson tried to give it. By a majority of one hundred and twenty-five the Chamber has coincided with the committee of inquiry and the Government. It has thus dispossessed the Criminal Chamber of the absolute right of judging alone. The clause voted is only the complement of a law already in existence, and therefore is not an exceptional measure passed to meet special circumstances.

This is how the matter stands at present. It is not done with yet, but if the head of the Cabinet, M. Dupuy, so wishes, it will soon be disposed of. He has made himself very popular by his vigorous action since he became convinced of the faults of the Criminal Chamber.

One thing has been brought into relief by these unhappy discussions, and especially by the publication of the documents touching the investigations—namely, the state of abasement into which judicial morals in France have fallen. This result was plainly foreseen in 1883, when Government and Parliament resolved to do away with the irremovable character of the judge's position, in order to make room on the bench for men of little capacity and mediocre morality.

We have shown that the judicial staff is a very numerous one, even if we leave out the three thousand justices of the peace and a still larger body of deputy-justices. Counting the subaltern employees, it forms a veritable army corps that holds the country at its discretion. It even numbers, in its secondary ranks, officers who can at their pleasure imprison people and bring them by dark and devious ways to ruin and dishonor.

A *juge d'instruction* belonging to the Tribunal of the Seine, a good, learned, and circumspect man, was once questioned by the Emperor Napoleon the Third about his duties. With a good humor not wholly free from irony, the judge replied: "Sire, I am more powerful than your Majesty." "How so?" "You cannot, directly and of your own will, throw a man into prison; I can do that." The magistrate then explained how, on the slightest pretext, or acting upon the most trivial denunciation, an inquiring judge, once put in charge of a case by the Public Prosecutor, could have an innocent person—an entire stranger to

the affair—arrested and kept in solitary confinement, if he thought the person had been concerned in it. A personal enemy could be locked up, which of course would be a disgraceful proceeding, or simply a suspected man, which would be the result of excessive zeal. The Emperor's face assumed an anxious expression, and certainly, if war had not broken out soon afterwards, he would have asked his Minister of Justice, M. Emile Ollivier, to place a limit to these extravagant powers and make some special rules as to the choice of the magistrates entrusted with such dangerous though honorable duties.

No change has yet been made in this respect, except that now the examination must be made in the presence of the accused's counsel. Do not suppose, however, that this safeguard, copied from English legislation, has come into favor in France. True, we are not likely to see a repetition of the case of the woman, accused of infanticide, who was brought, by a too skilful examination, to confess a crime she had not committed, as was proved by her giving birth a few days later to the child she had been charged with destroying; but the Panama case, the history of which is related with so much vivacity and humor by M. Henri Maret, Deputy, in his book entitled "*La Justice*," and the more recent affair of the placing in solitary confinement of Major Esterhazy, are not of such a nature as to denote a great step forward in judicial methods. A deputy belonging to the Right, M. de Ramel, has recently drawn attention to the matter by bringing in a bill which, if passed, will make the liberty of the individual more of a reality, and render men's homes more secure from invasion than they are now.

There is room for several other improvements in the system of dispensing justice in France. Complaint is

made that legal proceedings are too slow and too costly. It is written in our laws that justice is rendered without expense to the litigants, but this is utterly false. On the contrary, it is very expensive. If we seek the reason of this, we find that the State makes it a source of revenue in various ways—stamps, registration fees, etc. The sinuosities of legal procedure are peopled with officials who stop you on your way and make you pay dearly for the honor of their signatures. At every step in the formalities, civil or criminal, there is a tax to pay. You have no right to receive payment from a debtor for what he owes you until you have settled, for him and in his stead, the costs in which he has been mulcted. The treasury is obliged to get back somehow or other the money it pays out in judges' salaries! There are over three thousand senior officers and more than ten thousand subalterns, corporals and privates, in this army of functionaries who look to the State for their pay. The Court of Cassation does not cost less than 1,147,000 francs per annum, plus 32,300 francs of petty expenses. This is the price at which it renders its decrees, or its *services*, when required. The courts of appeal cannot live on less than 6,515,033 francs a year. The tribunals of first instance need more—11,534,000 francs; or, if we add the salary of the judge of Andorra and certain expenses of the tribunals of commerce and the police courts, 97,700 francs more. As to the justices of the peace, they are very valuable, but costly, their price being 8,413,000 francs for France, and 697,650 francs for Algeria. The criminal courts are satisfied with 5,850,000 francs for the two countries. We say nothing about the cost of maintenance of the court buildings.

Justice is administered in France and Algeria at a total expense of not



less than 25,000,000 francs per annum. If we did not know what a large number of judges are paid out of this sum, we might suppose it to be a most profitable career. This is not the fact. French judges are badly off when they have not a private fortune. Their salaries are worse than mediocre. In this connection there recurs to our mind a remark which was made by one of our friends in England. It was in the time of the Empire, but the salaries have not been increased very much since then, save in a few cases. Said our friend: "You want to be served like princes, and you pay your employees like lackeys." We will not say that France treats her judges like lackeys, but assuredly she does not pay them as they ought to be paid. A judge is a man above almost all others. He must be of unimpeachable integrity, learned, even erudite, in the law, conscientious to an extreme, well-bred, impartial, endowed with perspicacity, good sense, and uprightness, unshakably loyal to the truth, inaccessible to popularity, and beyond the reach of Governmental influences. Such a man ought not to be subjected to the anxieties of making both ends meet, nor left in uncertainty as to what the future may have in store for him and his family. By an Act passed in 1814, judges were made irremovable, and were, if not well paid, at all events, sure of holding their posts. There was also the dignity of the position, as in those days it was not easy for the first comer to get elevated to the bench. Every man chosen did not fulfil the ideal we have sketched, but for a very long time the judicial body retained a high character. The upheavals that came later on shook the institution no doubt, but the revolutionists were careful not to throw it down. More recently it received a

deadly blow. Things were done which gave rise to the fear that Justice would have to veil her face. This apprehension was temporary, but it sprang up again the day when a blind Ministry and Parliament, in order to facilitate the task of governing, did away with the permanent character of the judge's position. This step diminished his moral weight, and from that moment he found himself beginning to be looked upon by the nation with distrust, and felt that he was descending in the public's esteem. It seemed to many people that the new magistracy was going to serve political interests and sacrifice honor to Governmental influences, but, although the judges no longer had the renown of former days, the new ones zealously strove to imitate the virtues of the old.

This is not enough. The great reform which will come to pass some day is not, perhaps, compatible with universal suffrage as it exists at present; but it is to be hoped that in the future our judges will be placed so far beyond the reach of improper influences that they cannot fall. Instead of the ill-paid thousands we have now, a few hundred would suffice. The idea of having single judges in the courts is gaining ground. It is seen to be a means of eliminating a number of mediocrities, of letting in only men of great talent, and of making the judge strong enough and independent enough to soar above the level of the agitated community and hold the balance evenly between small and great, weak and strong, iniquity and right. Liberal salaries could be paid—not, however, such splendid ones as those received by the judges of the United Kingdom—and yet a substantial saving be effected by the State, while the cause of justice would be infinitely better served.



## AN INCIDENT OF THE NIGER TRADE.

Two white men were hard at work in the galvanized iron oil-shed of the little trading factory of Gwelo, which lies far away among the Niger swamps, one sweltering July day. Young Charles Carson, clad in cotton singlet and thin duck trousers, stood with the perspiration dripping from him beside a big tub "cooler," into which a swarm of naked river-men cast basket after basket of greasy black kernels until the measure was full. Then he handed the native trader a brass "tally" as a voucher for the goods brought down. Meantime a middle-aged man, Agent Crosby, carefully probed the calabashes of sticky yellow oil thrust upon him one after another, lest the wily bushman had inserted a chunk of wood therein—timber being cheaper than oil. Every now and then he squeezed a coil of viscous green rubber together, in case a heavy stone lay in the centre, for it is by no means so easy for an unprincipled white trader to victimize the unsophisticated savage as some missionaries aver. It was fiercely hot, and the sickly smell of palm-oil mingled with the fetid odor of raw rubber, which is considerably worse than that of rotten eggs, and savors even more disagreeably; while every negro endeavored to thrust his comrades aside and shouted at the top of his voice. The din and awful atmosphere would have driven a stranger gasping outside in five minutes; and yet these two white men had toiled there from early dawn to noon, and their day's work was but half-done. Presently four pompous Krooboyes cleared the shed with staves, and, followed by an unruly mob, the traders crossed the scorching compound and entered the "store-shed" or "shop." The room was at once filled with a shouting, strug-

gling crowd, and a scene of wild confusion ensued. Each negro hurled down his tally, and proceeded to grab at whatever took his fancy, regardless of value. Cases of gin, pieces of cloth, flintlock guns, and powder were most in demand; but bottles of pomade (used as a condiment), scarlet jackets, battered silk hats, and brass-framed looking-glasses were also fought over; and amidst a babel of contentious cries the white men did what they could to protect their property from wholesale loot. As usual, the weakest went to the wall, and in the confusion the savage with the strongest hands secured as much as he could of his neighbor's goods in addition to his own; and this is how trade with the natives is carried on among the Niger creeks. Once or twice Carson noticed a naked bushman calmly appropriating double the value of his tally right under the agent's eyes, and wondered thereat, for Crosby was not a man to trifle with. That afternoon, however, there was a weary look in the shrewd face which he had never seen before, and the agent seemed to have lost his usual keenness over a bargain. At last, when the scorching day drew near its close and the shadows of the palms lengthened across the dusty compound, the babel of voices ceased suddenly, and the surging crowd grew still. Agent Crosby laid a hand upon his revolver and swore savagely beneath his breath. Then a tall negro, only distinguishable from the rest by the intricacy and beauty of his tattoo and the curious device standing out in relief upon his naked breast, passed through the shrinking negroes, and, gazing for a moment at the white man, turned suddenly away.

"One of those condemned Ju-Ju men,

only a half-fledged poisoner this time. I'd have shot the brute, for there's always trouble when they're about, only this unhallowed crowd would have burned the factory about our heads. Anyway, it's time to close," said the agent harshly, and his face twitched as he spoke. Then he raised his voice. "No more trade live, palaver set. Hyah, Krooboy, clear them store. Get out, all of you."

Two hours later, after finishing their scanty meal, the white men sat out upon the wide veranda, tormented by buzzing mosquitoes, and gazing across the moonlit river. Behind them lay the reeking swamps, and in front a sheet of shimmering water, streaked with trails of fevermist, beyond which a great cottonwood forest rose like a wall against the starry heavens. The inevitable whiskey and a syphon of lukewarm mineral water stood upon a carved Accra stool by the agent's side; and Crosby's speech was slow as he said, "No one could be cheerful in this weather; but I've been unusually unfit all day, and there's a curious weight upon my mind to-night." The young assistant made no reply. He knew that alcohol and fever had spoiled his comrade's nerve, and he was used to talk of the kind. Then the agent continued: "I suppose it was that Ju-Ju man. Every time one of the brutes has set his foot in the place something has happened; and I wish to goodness we had left their condemned fetich-house alone." Carson only nodded. He had heard that when the factory was established the spot most available for a canoe landing was occupied by a little basket-work hut, erected in honor of the river-devils and wandering ghosts. This Crosby had promptly destroyed, and had regretted it ever since.

Presently the thick voice went on: "Two oil-sheds burnt, no one knew how, and three assistants dead in eighteen months—though that was fever;

and I hardly expected you would have lasted so long. Pah! it's a sickening, soul-destroying business, and I was not always a gin-trader. The old life, when I walked among my equals at home, with clean hands, comes back very plainly to-night. That's all gone, long ago; the rest are dead, and I'm stewing here in this pestilential hole, expiating my sins, I suppose."

Charlie groaned inwardly. There were times when the awful isolation and the deadly monotony of the life appalled him too; and, with a cheerfulness he was far from feeling, he answered, "Take a tabloid, and sleep over it; you'll feel better in the morning. Good-night."

When the young assistant entered his room he lighted a kerosene lamp, and smiled bitterly as the glow fell upon a scrap of printed paper, which, with grim irony, he had nailed to the mouldy wainscot above the medicine-chest. It was an advertisement from a provincial paper: "Wanted, a young man of good physique for West Africa factory. Interesting life, easy work, sport and adventure. Salary, £70 first year, with prospect of rapid advance." Then, shaking his fist at the delusive cutting, as he had done many times before, with the words, "You cruel lie," he flung himself down on his canvas couch, and, in spite of the heat and mosquitoes, was soon asleep. Twice he awakened from a restless doze, and walked out upon the rickety veranda, feeling a strange uneasiness, for the agent's words weighed upon his mind; but forest and swamp were sleeping silently in the tropic moonlight. Fireflies flashed and sparkled among the half-closed purple cups of the flowering creeper about the balustrade, and he heard the drowsy chatter of the Krooboy boys below, who apparently never sleep at all. Reassured, he flung himself down again, and passed far away from the dreary factory into the fairy-

land of dreams. Suddenly a strange, choking cry awoke him; and while he wondered drowsily what it could be, the veranda stairway creaked. Then the ringing bark of a Snider awakened all the echoes of the forest, and he heard the whirring flight of a heavy ball, followed by a dull thud as the projectile buried itself in a palm-trunk. There was a babel of many voices, and a rush of feet into the veranda; and Carson, wide awake at last, entered the adjoining room with a smoky lamp in his hand, while a crowd of trembling negroes clustered about the door. Agent Crosby lay gasping and fighting for breath upon his couch, with blue lips and ashy face, a reed spear buried in his breast. As the shuddering lad bent over him he choked out, "Remember the big lot of oil. A hard life. Ah! it's over," and, with a groan, turned away his head. There was a sudden silence; and while Carson gripped a post with quivering fingers a big Yoruba, who had once served the Niger Coast Protectorate as corporal, approached the couch.

"Trader live for dead, sah," he said, holding up the spear, and proceeded to relate how he had fired at a shadowy figure flitting through the gloom of the palms. Charlie took the weapon mechanically, and, like one in a dream, noted the tuft of red rags which adorned the haft—a symbol of the Ju-Ju mystery. Then he drove the wondering negroes away, and, this done, locked the door, and seated himself upon the veranda to wait for dawn, shivering in spite of the heat.

Shortly before noon next day he stood beneath the dusty palms, the burning sun-rays beating down upon his uncovered head as the curving fronds swayed to and fro in the sultry breeze. A shallow trench yawned at his feet, dust and sand upon its edge, and two feet of ooze and water below. Four Krooboys leaned upon their ker-

nel-shovels beside him, and in the sloppy mud lay one of the rough deal cases the long Dane-guns are shipped in, and this held all that remained of Agent Crosby, while his successor with dry lips and shaking voice repeated such portions of the burial service as he could remember. Presently he raised his hand, and two naked Krooboys stood upon the case to hold it down until their companions shovelled over the sand. Twice the thing tilted sideways, and floated to the surface; but at last the work was done, and Charlie Carson turned away with faltering steps towards the lonely factory. And this is a characteristic funeral in the Niger swamps.

A Protectorate official came up a few days later with an armed launch to investigate the affair. A native village was mulcted in palm-oil for the supposed offence of concealing the murderer; but the latter could not be found, and the officer went back uttering vain threats about closing that river to trade. This the natives knew he could not do without ruining the white factories at its mouth; therefore they laughed in their sleeves, and, as the weeks went by, sent down dribbles of adulterated oil in payment of the fine. Meantime the young agent hardened his heart to face the months of solitude that must elapse before assistance could arrive from home. To make things worse, it was the wet season, and his Krooboy laborers sickened one by one, while the intermittent fever came upon him too. Still, the chance of being duly appointed agent, at a salary of £300 per annum, was not likely to happen often; and, staking health and reason upon the uncertainty of surviving, he held grimly to his post, working twelve hours a day in the steamy heat of "the rains." Then, when darkness came, he dragged himself towards the quarters of the stricken Krooboys, whom he treated with

draughts prepared according to the Government Manual, which sometimes proved efficacious and sometimes the reverse. But no European may overwork himself with impunity in Africa, especially if reduced by fever; so week by week the health of the lonely man gave way, and strange fancies filled his mind. There were times when the wakeful Krooboy's shuddered and told strange tales of Ju-Ju magic and the power of the wood-devils, as they heard him pacing to and fro upon the veranda all night long. Also, when trade was slack, he would sit for hours gazing vacantly at the forest with stern, set face, and there was no negro among them dare approach him.

Then it came about that Captain Hinton Clifford was sent up the river with a dozen Yoruba soldiers to inquire why certain installments of the fine had not been paid, and to ascertain by whose authority a stiff-necked headman levied a heavy toll upon all the oil-carriers passing his stockade. Hinton Clifford was lately out from India, and brought with him a high opinion of himself and a very low one of the Niger country, which latter was perhaps justifiable. He was five feet ten in height, with shoulders to match, and had a way of looking at one out of half-shut eyes and speaking in a languid drawl, as though there was nothing in Africa worthy of his interest, which was trying to those who did not know the man. This, together with the spotless neatness of his dress, which is a thing rarely seen on the Niger, gained him the sobriquet of "Dainty Jim," though the observant Consul had an idea that his languid subordinate could be very much awake when occasion demanded.

The fever-mist was rolling in woolly wreaths across the tumble-down factory when his panting launch shot alongside Gwelo landing. The roar of

the rains was in the air, and every palm-frond vibrated and quivered with the rush of falling water. A few sickly Krooboy's dragged themselves about the entrance to the oil-shed, for trade was very slack; and there was an indefinite something which spoke of sickness and death about the whole place as the officer, accompanied by a big boar-hound, splashed through the compound towards the factory. When he stood dripping upon the veranda there was no one to meet him, and, thrusting open the door, he entered the trader's room. A young man, with deep lines upon his hollow face, knelt beside an open medicine-chest, measuring out drugs with a shaking hand.

"Glad to see you. I haven't heard a European voice for two months," he said; and Captain Clifford answered slowly, "A mutual pleasure; but you don't seem particularly cheerful. Alone here for two months! How any white man can live in the place at all is beyond me."

"As a rule they don't live very long. You can see four crosses, there, beneath the palms," was the quiet reply. "But you must be hungry.—Hyah, Kaloto, hurry that chop!"

Captain Clifford did not delight in half-boiled yams, rancid palm-oil chop, and two-year-old Chicago beef; but there was nothing else, and he ate with the best grace he could. Afterwards he explained that the factory would be honored with his presence for a fortnight, and handed Carson a letter announcing the fact that two new assistants were on the way, and that he might return when they arrived. Then the young agent commenced a rambling narrative, in the course of which he said various things which nearly shook the imperturbable officer out of his usual calm. When he concluded, "Crosby's dead; he died two months ago—I buried him myself; and yet—do you know?—he walks about the house all night

and calls me," the officer's eyes were open wide.

Presently Carson went out to resume his work, and Hinton Clifford became suddenly intent. "I've heard that kind of talk in the Indian jungle stations, and he's too young for the life—he knows it now," said the officer as he proceeded to overhaul the medicine-chest, for this man knew a little of many things. "As I expected—all the opiates gone; that accounts for part of the story, but no one can live for weeks without sleep. I'll take a few precautions," he continued, coolly appropriating various rough phials with red labels. Afterwards he visited the quarters of the sick Krooboys, and the sights he saw there haunted him at nights, though it would have been hard to recognize in that eager, thoughtful face and those skilful hands the indifferent dilettante of the Consular headquarters. Hinton Clifford did not enjoy that visit. The little tumble-down factory seemed full of whispers. The dog whined mournfully all night long, and it was disconcerting, to say the least, to be awakened at midnight by a creaking of the veranda, and to hear the hoarse voice of his host conversing with an unseen something in the mist below. More than once he had doubts of Carson's sanity, and wondered whether he would be justified in sending him down to the coast by force; but, after a glance at the carefully-kept books, he dismissed the idea. At last, as the officer afterwards said, the whole place so got upon his nerves that he fancied he saw two shadowy figures, and not one, pacing the dark veranda, and caught his breath when the rotten flooring creaked behind him for no apparent reason. At this he dosed himself with quinine, and compared the climates of Hindustan and Africa, to the disadvantage of the latter.

Then one evening he returned, cov-

ered with ashes and soot and glory, having burnt the water-gate of the offending chief, and after a scanty meal flung himself down to sleep. The trader lay in the adjoining room, which was that of the murdered agent, and a Yoruba sergeant slept upon the veranda. This was contrary to all ideas of discipline; but discipline is relaxed upon the frontier—and it was comforting to have him there. Tired as he was, the officer could not rest. It was intensely hot, with that damp and clammy heat which checks the perspiration and puts the fear of death into the hearts of Europeans dwelling in the African swamps. The mosquitoes, too, were unusually thirsty, and their triumphant trumpeting over a new victim nearly drove the officer mad. At times the boar-hound also crept about its master's couch, whining as though in pain or fear; and Clifford abused the animal, then stretched out a hot hand and patted the rough head, for he remembered that dogs suffer from the malaria as much as men. At last he sank into a restless doze, and awakening some hours later, saw the hound standing in a stream of misty moonlight, with every bristle of his neck erect. This had happened before, and, with a malediction on all things African, Clifford turned over on the other side. Then the dog crept softly out, and he heard the patter of its footsteps across the veranda; after which from the other side of the wood-work there rose a low, angry howl. "A most distressful brute; and I'm as nervous as a frightened child," he muttered, sitting up and rubbing his drowsy eyes. For a space there was no sound save the growling of the dog, the dry rustle of the palms, and the monotonous "crick-crack" of a boring-spider eating its way through the wainscot. Then the floorings creaked mysteriously; but they often did that. This time, however, there was something unusual in



the sound; and, with the big revolver which always lay beneath his pillow in his hand, Clifford sprang to the floor.

As he did so he heard a short, half-breathless cry, and something struck the partition a blow that made it shiver. In an instant the officer was out upon the veranda, keen-eyed and resolute, now the need of definite action had come. The door of Carson's room was shut, but a thrust of the powerful shoulder tore it from its rusty hinges, and, preceded by a crash of falling wood, Clifford leaped across the threshold. Two indistinct figures were swaying backwards and forwards in the gloom of the farther end; then, as he stood breathing hard and wondering what it could mean, they reeled into the stream of moonlight that entered the doorway. The pale rays fell upon the naked limbs of a huge negro and the thin form of the white trader, who, with one hand upon his assailant's throat, and one upon the sinewy black arm that raised a short reed-spear above him, made desperate efforts to withhold the thrust. Even as Clifford gazed, waiting a chance to intervene, the trader's head was forced backwards, and with a choking gasp he loosed his hold, while the negro raised his arm to drive home the glinting blade. But the broad black breast was now uncovered and the foresight of the officer's revolver trembled across the tattoo-device on its centre; then there was a flash of red flame, followed by a sharp detonation, and the room was filled with smoke. Through the smoke a wild object leaped towards the white man. Twice more the revolver flashed, but the assassin came on unchecked, and Clifford flung back his arm as the spear-head glittered before his eyes. But before it fell the steel butt of the heavy revolver came down upon the ebony face like the head of a battering-ram. In went teeth and jawbone; the negro lurched forward and struck the

creaking boards beside the officer's feet with the crash of a falling tree. Then there was a glimmer of lamps upon the veranda, and a rush of feet to the door as the Yorubas and Krooboyas crowded round the entrance.

Wiping the cold perspiration from his brow, Hinton Clifford said languidly, "Carried a lot of lead and died hard; but that fellow will fight no more." The factory Yoruba bent over the limp, black form, with a lamp in his hand, and pointing to the tattoo-work upon the naked breast and the curious carving on the spear-haft, rose suddenly and cried in the vernacular, "It is blood for blood; truly this is the justice of Allah."

"What does he say?" asked Clifford sharply; and when a soldier translated, added thoughtfully, "Perhaps he's right—these things are beyond me; but I should say that the man who killed Agent Crosby has met his deserts at last."

Charlie Carson came feebly forward, and, holding out a shaking hand, said hoarsely, "How can I thank you? You were only just in time; another moment there would have been an end. Pah! I can feel the choking fingers about my throat now."

"Very glad I did it. There, that will do. No use making a fuss," was the quiet answer. "Some of the Consul's tales about the power these brutes possess must be true, or the dog would have torn him to bits. See, he's afraid still, and the beast never showed the white feather before." Then Clifford stooped to pat the trembling hound, which crept whining to his knee, and afterwards raised his voice: "Take him away, you, Krooboy, and bring plenty lights. I don't want to sleep any more to-night," he said.

On the following morning the new staff, consisting of an alcohol-soaked agent, with more energy than character, from Lekki lagoon, and two young



assistants fresh from home and evidently little pleased with what they had seen of the Oil Rivers, arrived in a broken-down launch. Thereupon Charlie Caŕson shook off the dust of that factory from his feet, and departed with Captain Clifford in the Consular despatch-boat. He was invalided home, and when he reached England found a letter from the Government officer had preceded him; and six months later he returned as full agent to a healthier station.

It was, of course, coincidence; but, owing to disputes between a certain bush headman and the oil-carriers over the right-of-way, which were argued out with the aid of poison and ambush, the Gwelo factory did little good.

*Chambers's Journal.*

Therefore the owners abandoned that particular creek, and the forest closed about the rickety buildings and swallowed them up. Festoons of rope-like creepers are steadily pulling down the tottering oil-shed; the house has crumbled into a mass of mouldering timber before the grasp of the ti-ti trailers; and the compound is covered feet deep with brushwood though it is barely two years since the last white man left it. Nevertheless the native traders, who are above all things superstitious, will not enter that creek in the darkness, and at all times give the ruins a wide berth. They say there is a curse upon the place; and perhaps they are right.

*Harold Bindloss.*

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#### ONLY A SONG.

Love says not much, but says it, oh! so well,

We cannot tell

What is the meaning of its secret spell.

Its charm divine

Is like the murmur of a sounding shell,

Heard in the pauses of the ocean's swell,

In Beauty's oft-recurring parallel.

Its feeling line,

Artless of rule, yet more than rules of art

Unconscious pierces, probes, with inward smart

The lover's breast, the patriot's swelling heart.

Its music fine

Is such, that if the singer break his song,

And stop, the very spheres seem all a-wrong;

We bid him take his lute, and sweet and strong

Renew his strain.

"O singer, sing once more the old refrain!

And Echo faint its burden still prolong

In memory's chain!

And lest it perish, being only song,

Unconscious pierces, probes, with inward smart

Sing it again!

Again! again!"

*A. G. B.*

## THE BROWNING LOVE-LETTERS.\*

Mr. Robert Barrett Browning, by whose authority these letters are published, has seen that so unusual a proceeding required to be justified to the world, and he has accordingly prefixed to the book an explanatory note. He writes:—

In considering the question of publishing these letters, which are all that ever passed between my father and mother, for after their marriage they were never separated, it seemed to me that my only alternatives were to allow them to be published or to destroy them. I might indeed have left the matter to the decision of others after my death, but that would be evading a responsibility which I feel that I ought to accept. Ever since my mother's death these letters were kept by my father in a certain inlaid box into which they exactly fitted, and where they always rested letter beside letter, each in its consecutive order, and numbered on the envelope by his own hand. My father destroyed all the rest of his correspondence, and not long before his death he said, referring to these letters, "There they are; do with them as you please when I am dead and gone."

To say this was certainly to give permission to publish, but there will none the less be a difference of opinion as to whether the son has done well to avail himself of it. The letters are very intimate and very long, covering more than 1,100 closely printed pages. The story which they unfold is of the simplest; there is little variety of sentiment, and not even a lovers' quarrel over the whole twenty months; there are no incidents more remarkable than Browning's speech at the Literary Fund dinner, the visits of Mr. Kenyon to Miss Barrett, and the capture of "Flush, my dog," by a gang of White-

chapel dog-stealers and the story of his ransom. On the other hand, the volumes form a record, perhaps unexampled in literature, of the passionate feeling entertained for one another by two souls *d'élite*; they tell the story of an intellectual friendship quickly ripening into love, and into a love which rooted itself deeper and deeper as the days went by, and as the obstacles offered by an unsympathetic family seemed to become stronger. The curious thing about the love of Robert Browning and Elizabeth Barrett is that it was kept a profound secret from everybody, although Miss Barrett was living with her family and was receiving for more than a year weekly visits from her poet friend. The reasons for this secrecy, which shrewd old Mr. Kenyon was apparently the only one to penetrate, may be better gathered from the former volumes of Mrs. Browning's letters than from these; they seem to be summed up in her fear of her father, a man of obstinate temper, and perhaps not quite sane, who, the lovers seem to have thought, would probably regard Robert Browning as a fortune-hunter. Elizabeth had a few hundreds a year of her own, whereas the poet had nothing but his pen, which appealed to a narrower circle in those days than twenty years later. Judging from the evidence of these letters alone, it would seem that the Browning-Barrett story offers no exception to the good common sense rule that in nine cases out of ten a secret engagement is a foolish mistake. If Robert Browning, whom the Times at this very moment was calling "a prince of poets," and to whom Moxon was saying, "Your books sell and will sell," had, with John Kenyon to back him,

\* The Letters of Robert Browning and Elizabeth Barrett Barrett, 1845-1846. With portraits and fac-similes, 2 vols.

boldly tackled Edward Barrett and asked for the hand of his daughter as soon as she might recover her health, the probability is that all would have been well and that everybody would have been saved a great deal of trouble and anxiety. This procedure, however, commended itself to neither lover: Browning saw nothing of his new family, and in the end, on September 12, 1846, Elizabeth and her faithful maid, Wilson, slipped out of the front door of No. 50 Wimpole Street, went round to St. Marylebone Church, and there the poet and the poetess were married—she to return home, to take off her ring, and a week later to join her husband in what was to all intents and purposes an elopement to Paris. The furious anger of the father is described in the earlier volumes of letters, published sixteen months ago.

The letters before us, then, cover the period between January 10, 1845, and the date last mentioned. At the beginning Miss Barrett was an invalid, only from time to time receiving her few intimate friends, and it was not till May 20 that she could allow Browning to come to see her. But in the interval the friendship begun and carried on by these letters had become very close, founded as it was upon an instinctive sympathy and upon a genuine mutual admiration. In his very first letter Browning speaks of "this true thankful joy and pride with which I feel myself yours ever faithfully;" three weeks later she claims to be treated *en bon camarade*, to which, if he will consent, "why, then I am ready to sign and seal the contract, and to rejoice in being 'articled' as your correspondent, only don't let us have any constraint, any ceremony." A few days afterwards he is wishing that some way could be found "to make my 'dear' something intenser than 'dears' in ordinary, and 'yours

ever' a thought more significant than the run of its like." Then came the first and subsequent meetings, and the addresses on both sides grow to "God ever bless you, dear friend," though of course the contents are as yet mostly literary and more or less abstract. By August he calls her "my one friend without an 'other,'" till by and by we slip into "dearest," and his claiming her love, and this touching answer (September 27):—

I will say, I must say, that your words in this letter have done me good and made me happy. . . . that I thank and bless you for them, . . . and that to receive such a proof of attachment from you, not only overpowers every present evil, but seems to me a full and abundant amends for the merely personal sufferings of my whole life. When I had read that letter last night I did think so. I looked round and round for the small bitternesses which for several days had been bitter to me, and I could not find one of them. The tear marks went away in the moisture of new, happy tears. Why, how else could I have felt? How else do you think I could? How would any woman have felt . . . who could feel at all . . . hearing such words said (though "in a dream," indeed) by such a speaker?

And now listen to me in turn. You have touched me more profoundly than I thought even you could have touched me—my heart was full when you came here to-day. Henceforward I am yours for everything but to do you harm—and I am yours too much, in my heart, ever to consent to do you harm in that way. If I could consent to do it, not only should I be less loyal . . . but in one sense, less yours. I say this to you without drawback and reserve, because it is all I am able to say, and perhaps all I shall be able to say. However this may be, a promise goes to you in it that none except God and your will shall interpose between you and me, . . . I mean, that if He should free me within a moderate time from the trailing chain of this weakness, I will then be to you whatever at that hour you shall choose . . . whether friend or more than friend . . . a friend to the last in any case.

But she wishes him to consider himself absolutely free and unentangled;

she can hardly believe that she will ever be well enough to marry. Of course he scouts the notion, and henceforth the letters on both sides are as warm as the letters of an engaged couple should be. They are also, as is right, over and beyond the expression and analysis of affection, a record of whatever things and thoughts, experience of the world or of books, may have been interesting each in the intervals between the weekly visits. There is criticism—admiring, but on the whole, sound—of each other's verse; for, be it remembered, this was the moment in which Browning was bringing out the different parts of "Bells and Pomegranates," especially "Luria," and many of the shorter poems which have been household words to the true lovers of poetry ever since. There are also occasional criticisms, sometimes rather sharp, of other writers; of Mrs. Shelley, for example, and her book on Italy:—"The 'Mary dear' with the brown eyes, and Godwin's daughter and Shelley's wife, and who surely was something better once on a time . . . once she travelled the country with Shelley on arm; now she plods it Rogers in hand—to such things and uses may we come at last!"

Both the writers have something to say about a young critic and poet who came to be much heard of in later years. The following was perfectly true in 1845, but as time went on the subject of it took himself seriously in hand and became a really learned man. "How right you are," says Browning, "about Mr. Lowell" (this refers to his "Conversations on Some of the Old Poets"). "He has a refined fancy, and is graceful for an American critic, but the truth is, otherwise, that he knows nothing of English poetry, or the next thing to nothing, and has merely had a dream of the early dramatists. The amount of his read-

ing in that direction is an article in the Retrospective Review." At that time Browning did not quite like the Americans—what English author did before the days of copyright?—but he is ready to recognize the sudden progress which they were making in culture about this very time. Some Boston publishers had made a proposal to Miss Barrett that she should collect and edit certain papers of hers which had appeared in a periodical; she asks Browning's opinion, and this is his answer:—

Do pray reply without fail to the proposers; no, no harm of these really fine fellows, who could do harm (by printing incorrect copies, and perhaps eking out the column by supposititious matter . . . *ex-gr.* they strengthened and lengthened a book of Dickens's in Paris by adding *quant. suff.* of Thackeray's "Yellowplush Papers" . . . as I discovered by a Parisian somebody praising the latter to me as Dickens' best work!—and who do really a good, straightforward, un-American thing. You will encourage "the day of small things"—though this is not small, nor likely to have small results. I shall be impatient to hear that you have decided. I like the progress of these Americans in taste, their amazing leaps, like grasshoppers up to the sun—from . . . what is the "from," what depth, do you remember, say, ten or twelve years back?—to—Carlyle, and Tennyson, and you! So children leave off Jack of Cornwall and go on just to Homer.

On the other hand, here are some spirited sentences of Miss Barrett's in defence of George Sand, and incidentally of other French writers of genius, against a Phillistine attack of a type that was commoner then than it is now, though it is not yet extinct:—

I have glanced over the paper in the Athenæum, and am of an increased certainty that Mr. Chorley is the writer. It is his way from beginning to end—and that is the way, observe, in which little critics get to tread on the heels of great writers who are too

great to kick backwards. Think of bringing George Sand to the level of the same sentence with such a woman as Mrs. Ellis! And then the infinite trash about the three eras in the Frenchwoman's career . . . which never would have been dragged into application there, if the critic had heard of her last two volumes . . . published since the "Meunier d'Angibault," "Teverino," and "Isidora." One may be angry and sin not over such inapplicable commonplace. The motive of it, the low expediency, is worse to me than the offence. Why mention her at all . . . why name in any fashion any of these French writers, for the reception of whom the English mind is certainly not prepared, unless they are to be named worthily, recognized righteously? It is just the principle of the advice about the De Kocks; whom people are to go and see and deny their acquaintance afterwards. Why not say boldly, "These writers have high faculty, and imagination such as none of our romance writers can pretend to—but they have besides a devil—and we do not recommend them as fit reading for English families!" Now, wouldn't it answer every purpose? Or silence would!—silence, at least. But this digging and nagging at great reputations . . . it is to me quite insufferable; and not compensated for by the motive, which is a truckling to conventions rather than to morals. As if earnestness of aim was not, from the beginning, from "Rose et Blanche" and "Indiana," a characteristic of George Sand! Really, it is pitiful.

There are passages too of equally generous appreciation of some English contemporaries, and especially of Tennyson, though we may perhaps detect here and there in Miss Barrett's judgments a natural unwillingness to place the future Laureate quite as high as her own "prince of poets." The following, considering its source, is a very interesting criticism which apparently was suggested by her sight of the prize poem on Timbuctoo, written some fifteen years before:—

Yes, the poem is too good in certain respects for the prizes given in colleges (when all the pure parsley goes naturally to the rabbits), and has a

great deal of beauty here and there in image and expression. Still, I do not quite agree with you that it reaches the Tennyson standard anyway; and for the blank verse I cannot for a moment think it comparable to one of the grand passages in "Enone," and "Arthur," and the like. In fact, I seem to hear more in that latter blank verse than you do . . . to hear not only a "mighty line" as in Marlowe, but a noble, full, orbicular wholeness in complete passages—which always struck me as the mystery of music and great peculiarity in Tennyson's versification, inasmuch as he attains to these complete effects without that shifting of the pause practised by the masters . . . Shelley and others. "A linked music" in which there are no links!—that you would take to be a contradiction—and yet something like that my ear has always seemed to perceive; and I have wondered curiously again and again how there could be so much union and no fastening. Only, of course, it is not model versification—and for dramatic purposes it must be admitted to be bad.

But we are dwelling too long upon the non-essentials of these volumes, for such passages as these might have been written from "any friend to any friend." Even outside the love-passages there are others more personal, more self-revealing, among which may be mentioned Browning's long essay, for it is nothing else, in defence of duelling, containing a story which would have made a dramatic idyl as fine and as terrible as "Ivan" itself (II., 51); and, still more interesting from the dramatic contrast of characters, the correspondence about the stealing of poor Flush. Here are the two Brownings, their temperaments, their poetry in a nutshell. A pet dog is stolen: the chief of the gang presents himself and offers to return it for a certain ransom; what is to be done? What are the ethics of the case? She, all affection and emotion, is for instantly paying, and for rescuing the darling animal from his ravishers, his possible murderers. He, the man, the embodied conscience of

the community, is for instant attack, for tracking down the gang, for stamping it out, for exterminating the public nuisance, even though the prime consequence should be Flush's head sent home in a charger. Really the passion, the eloquence on both sides are splendid; the eternal opposition of sex is here, called out and made living by a little stolen spaniel! Only one cannot help remembering that the spaniel was hers, not his. Perhaps if he had lost some favorite he would have been less magnificently logical and public-spirited in considering the case.

Among the letters published in 1897 is one written by Mrs. Browning, a month after her marriage, to her friend Mrs. Martin, which summarizes for the outer world the whole story which is here set forth in two volumes. Speaking of Mr. Browning's first request to see her she says:—

It was utterly impossible for me to refuse to receive him. . . He writes the most exquisite letters, and has a way of putting things which I have not—so he came. He came, and with our personal acquaintance began his attachment for me, a sort of infatuation call it, which resisted the various denials which were my plain duty at the beginning, and he persisted past them all.

But this infatuation for a fragile, sickly little woman of forty (she was born in 1806) was as true an instance of love, pervasive and enduring, of love felt and returned between two human beings of the highest sensibility, as history has ever recorded, or as has ever remained hidden in the con-

London Times.

sciousness of lovers. It was in vain that the good Miss Mitford, blundering through ignorance of the situation, denounced love-marriages to Elizabeth Barrett:—

She asserts that every marriage in her experience, beginning by any sort of love, has ended miserably. It was in vain that she denounced man in all his varieties:—"She told me last autumn that all men, without exception, are essentially tyrants—and that poets are a worse species of men, since all human feelings they put into their verses and leave them there!" She did not frighten her friend, and the only apparent effect of her tirade was to make Browning write forth the most enthusiastic, the most enraptured of all his letters, extolling his love's "adorable spirit" and her "phrases which fall into my heart and stay there."

The sequel we all know—the marriage so perfect in spite of all drawbacks of ill-health and family opposition. But of that the record is not here. The letters end with that married elopement of which we have spoken. The story which they tell is of the birth and growth of love, not of its full fruition. Written out by Robert Browning and Elizabeth Barrett, it cannot fail to be of the rarest interest. But the reader as he lays down the volumes is inclined to ask himself whether there is not something almost profane in such a revelation, and whether the world had not been brought sufficiently near to the sacred Mysteries when it was invited to read the "Sonnets from the Portuguese," the lines beginning "O Lyric Love!" and the exquisite "One Word More."



### THE BYE-WAYS OF JOURNALISM.

Readers of "Bleak House" must be familiar with "the two gentlemen not very neat about the cuffs and buttons" who flit across the crowded pages of that story of London life. They are first introduced at the inquest, held at the Sol's Arms, on the body of the mysterious old copying clerk. The beadle is very attentive to them; "for they are," writes Dickens, "the public chroniclers of such inquiries by the line; and he is not superior to the universal human infirmity, but hopes to read in print what 'Mooney, the active and intelligent beadle of the district,' said and did." They appear again when Mr. Krook dies of spontaneous combustion; and they write, the novelist tells us, with "ravenous little pens on tissue paper" the horrifying particulars of that strange event. These humble workers in the bye-ways of journalism are known to-day, as in the days of Dickens, as "penny-a-liners."

It is, perhaps, unnecessary in these newspaper-reading days to explain what "penny-a-lining" means. Most people know that "penny-a-lining" is a system in journalism by which men who are not regularly attached to any newspaper send items of news—odds and ends of all kinds which they may chance to pick up—to several journals, which are paid for, if published, at the rate of a penny a line. But penny-a-lining is not quite an accurate expression nowadays, so far as London, at least, is concerned. Years ago, when the term was invented, the newspapers only paid a penny a line for items of news accepted from persons unattached to their regular staffs; but now three-halfpence and twopence a line are paid for such reports and paragraphs by the big Metropolitan "dailies." Indeed, "penny-a-liner" has become an

epithet of contempt in journalism. To call a journalist a "penny-a-liner" is to insinuate that he belongs to the lowest and rather disreputable circles of the profession. This seems to be recognized outside the ranks of journalism also. It is only a short time ago that one of our most eminent statesmen stigmatized as "a penny-a-liner" a well-known political journalist who was in the habit of attacking him in his newspaper; and, apparently, the eminent statesman conceived that by the application of that epithet he had administered a terrible castigation to his adversary. "Liner" is the name by which a member of this curious and interesting class of journalists is now known.

London is so vast in extent that none of the daily newspapers could possibly keep a regular staff of reporters large enough to cover everything of public interest which occurs within its borders, and sub-editors—or the news editors, as they are sometimes called—are therefore very glad to avail themselves of the services of these vigilant "liners," who are to be found in all parts of the mighty Metropolis, ever on the look-out for material for a paragraph or a report. They are always on the prowl after accidents, fires, burglaries, and murders; they haunt the great hospitals, the central police stations, and the stations of the Fire Brigade. They are a curious body of men, indeed. Most of them, perhaps, are poorly educated and unambitious, but some of them are able men—men even of University education—who have had tragic experience of the ups and downs of a journalist's life; men who have held important positions on the staffs of our best newspapers, and who for some reason have failed; and, indeed, it is not too much to say that among

the "liners" with which Fleet Street—the greatest newspaper thoroughfare in the world—is swarming will be found more sad failures, more ruined reputations, more crushed ambitions than in any other walk of life. Many are reputable, some are disreputable. The majority of them are induced by the nature of their occupation to look upon life as a comedy, a farce, and when a tragedy comes their way their only thought is the number of lines they can spin out of it, and the pounds and shillings it will bring in. An old journalist friend showed me a curious and amusing account which was sent to a newspaper he was connected with by one of these gentlemen. It ran

THE "MORNING MERCURY."

To S. W. Clacton, Dr.	s. d.
For Atrocious Murder in Bigley	
Street, S. E. . . . .	4 2
Burning of Brewster's fac-	
tory, Mile End . . . . .	2 3
Sinking of a Thames passenger	
steamer . . . . .	3 2
Dreadful Shipping Conflagra-	
tion at the Docks . . . . .	6 1
Poisoning of the Macklin fam-	
ily, Drury Lane . . . . .	2 6

And so on. One would have imagined that this desperate ruffian, S. W. Clacton, had for the small sum of 2s. 6d.—to take only one item of the account—poisoned an unfortunate family in Drury Lane. But, happily, he was not so bad as that. The amounts set forth in the account were the payments due to S. W. Clacton for his paragraphs describing those conflagrations and murders, at the rate of a penny, three-halfpence, or twopence a line. Some poet has thus sung of the "liner":—

A house afire is breakfast, and a storm  
Serves for a luncheon; murder is his  
dinner—

Welcome to him is crime in every  
form.

Woe and misfortune clothe and feed  
the sinner.

Thieves, scoundrels, knaves find morsels  
for his jaws;

And, as effect fast follows after cause,  
He grows the fine original he draws.

The last lines of the verse are, I think, a little too rough on the "liner." I never heard of one of the fraternity in London committing a murder or setting fire to a factory in order to make a paragraph, though some years ago a newspaper correspondent in the West of Ireland was sent to penal servitude for a series of outrages—such as burning hay-ricks and maiming cattle—which he himself committed, and then telegraphed the harrowing details to various journals.

There are stories told of these journalists which aptly illustrate their common habit of regarding every event from the standpoint of their own special work. One of them coming home one night discovered a man insensible at his threshold, and with great presence of mind, without losing a moment, he called out to his wife, "Quick, my dear, bring a light; here's a paragraph lying on the door-steps!" As another "liner" was walking along the quays of Dublin a man rushed past him and jumped over the wall into the Liffey. The journalist immediately looked at his watch. "How provoking!" he exclaimed. "It's six o'clock and I'm too late for the last edition of the Evening Mail," and addressing the suicide struggling in the water, he added, "All right, my boy; I'll give you a good paragraph in the morning papers."

"Lining" is on the whole a precarious employment. Some "liners" manage to make a fairly good income, but most of them only eke out a miserable existence. There are, it is true, cases in which, by a combination of circumstances, large sums were quickly and quite unexpectedly made by certain "liners" who had got hold of information which their fellows had missed. An inquest was held in the East of London in regard to what was supposed to be merely a common suicide,

but after an hour's evidence facts were revealed which showed that a mysterious murder had been committed. Only one "liner" was present, and the inquest lasted ten days, during which time the six daily papers then existing took the whole of his copy, amounting to from two to four columns per diem. At the end of the inquiry he received close upon 100*l.* from the six newspapers. In another instance, in which three "liners" combined to report a railway accident inquest of great importance, each man received 15*l.* from each of the six journals. Again, a good police case in a suburban court worked by a "liner" has been known to produce 30*l.*; and it often happens that a single fire on a dull night—that is, a night on which there is a lack of news—yields to the "liner" from 10*l.* to 20*l.* It may be asked, in relation to these cases, how it is that, after the first day, other "liners" did not enter into competition with those who had been first in the field? The reason is that it is a sort of unwritten law amongst sub-editors that whoever sends in the first part of a report has his contributions accepted to the end, or while there is "copy" in the affair. It must be also understood that by a process called "manifolding" the "liner" can make six or eight copies of his paragraph or report at the one writing, and he is therefore enabled to have his "copy" in the various newspaper offices with the least possible delay. The "liner's" working materials consist of a bundle of sheets of "flimsy," some "black paper," and a "stylus"—a smoothly rounded off ivory, steel, or agate point—with which he writes; and, as the "black" is apt to part with some of its surface, and the flimsy is rather greasy, it is no wonder that during working hours the face of the industrious "liner" is smutty, and that, as Dickens says, he is "not very neat about the cuffs." But though Fortune

occasionally smiles in that way on the "liner," his income is very uncertain. Want of space is his chief enemy. Pressure of political speeches, or war news, or advertisements may, any night, absorb the whole available space of a newspaper; and then the copy of the "liner" is rejected for want of room, or "cut down" to such small dimensions that his day's work may return him not two or three pounds, but only a few shillings. Any one who has ever filled the sub-editor's chair on a daily paper well knows with what a pang of conscience the carefully written flimsy of some well-known and trusted, but humble and needy, "liner" is consigned to the waste-paper basket.

That the "liner" is a man not only of resource and industry, but of verbosity, must be obvious. As his remuneration depends on the amount of his copy which is inserted, he generally writes about five times, or even ten times, as much as is ever printed. His powers of amplification are, indeed, enormous. Whatever may be said of him, he cannot be accused of not dragging in every petty detail of the murder, fire, suicide, or burglary which is the subject of his paragraph or report. With him terseness is a crime, and the maxim that "brevity is the soul of wit" is line-killing and penny-destroying. "He has gone to that bourn from whence no traveller returns," instead of "he died," "terrific conflagration" for "bad fire," or "desperate struggle" for "fight" will often "turn" a line, and therefore bring in an additional penny or twopence. Among the literary curiosities of a daily paper with which I was once connected is a report from an amateur journalist ambitious of being a "liner," with the bill for his services. He thought that payment was made not on the printed line, but on the written line. He therefore wrote his "copy" on narrow slips of paper, and in a hand just a shade smaller than

the name over a shop door; then counted the lines carefully, and demanded payment at a penny a line for his manuscript!

It is to the "liner" we owe such "purple patches" as "the devouring element," "the watery grave," "no motive can be ascribed for the rash act," "the neighboring religious edifices," which were always "brought into prominent relief by the flames," and the "neighborhood" which used to be "thrown into a state of the utmost consternation," "the vital spark," which was always fleeing, and the "lurid flames shot up and licked the doomed edifice with malignant glee." These loud-sounding words and phrases are now ruthlessly suppressed by the blue pencil of the sub-editor. Yet, owing to the bad example of the "liner," the people that "partake of refreshments," instead of eating and drinking, and the young lady of "prepossessing appearance," but—the liner is always great with his "buts"—"fashionably attired"—never "dressed"—still live in the columns of the daily press. Occasionally the "liner" produces a gem of unconscious humor. A report of the murder of a man named Ducan once came under my notice in a sub-editor's room. "The murderer," wrote the "liner," "was evidently in quest of money, but, luckily, Mr. Ducan had deposited all his funds in the bank the day before, so that he lost nothing but his life." Another "liner," describing a street accident, wrote, "The unfortunate victim was taken to Guy's Hospital, where he now lies, progressing favorably, although he is sedulously attended by Dr. J. R. Robertson, the resident surgeon, and some of the leading members of the medical staff." What he meant to convey was that, though the man had been so dreadfully injured as to require the services of several doctors, he was progressing towards recovery. I have also seen this in a report in a Glasgow

newspaper of a shipwreck off the coast of Ayr: "The captain swam ashore, and succeeded in also saving the life of his wife. She was insured in the Northern Marine Insurance Co. for 5,000*l.*, and carried a full cargo of cement."

The "liner," it will be seen, revels in "appalling disasters." He is out of spirits and his pockets are empty in the piping times of peace when even an assault on a policeman is of rare occurrence. But a strange suicide, a mysterious murder, a fatal fire, or a sensational burglary makes a new man of him, and convinces him that really, after all, life is worth living. There is a grisly story of a "liner" who had not had material for a paragraph for weeks. People persisted in not murdering any one; they would not even commit suicide or drop down dead; fires would not burst out; and the burglar and pickpocket had evidently temporarily given up business. He lived in a cheap suburb, and one afternoon was walking dolefully in his scrap of back garden, smoking his pipe and racking his brains to find out where the next week's dinners for his wife and children were to come from, when he suddenly heard screams proceeding from adjoining premises. He dropped his pipe and rushed out, but soon returned. "Mary! Mary!" he cried to his long-suffering partner, "fetch my hat. Thank God! a woman a few doors up has cut her three children's throats, and we shall have a good dinner on Sunday!" A double murder will pay his quarter's rent; and a romantic suicide in high life will give him a pleasant holiday. I know a very successful "liner" who has a most comfortable home in a London suburb. But his house is suggestive of the Chamber of Horrors at Madame Tussaud's Exhibition, or the Black Museum at Scotland Yard, for almost every piece of furniture in it has associations of a mur-

der, a fire, or a burglary. "Look at this," he will say, pointing to his writing table; "that's a memorial of Dr. Neill Cream, the Lambeth poisoner; and my 'lineage' out of the 'Southend Murder Mystery' brought me the arm-chair in which you are sitting." He is very fond of his piano. He owes it to the historic meetings of the Irish Parliamentary Party in Room 15. A fine landscape in oils is associated with the crash of the Liberator Building Society; and his handsome illustrated edition of the poets has been bought out of his earnings in connection with the burning of a big warehouse in the city. They are to him what his scalps are to an Indian brave—signal proofs of his success as a "liner."

Formerly, in those dreary intervals in which there was nothing stirring in police or coroners' courts, the most needy and the most reckless "liners" succumbed to the temptation of inventing news, or of building it up on the flimsiest foundations. Late at night, shortly before the hour of going to press, a report of a sensational murder, or fire, or accident, would arrive at the office of a newspaper, and, as it was too late to have it authoritatively verified, and as it was too important a piece of news to hold over—especially as the other journals were certain to have it also—it would be published on chance. A few days afterwards—for our grandfathers in journalism moved very slowly—a denial of the bogus report might appear, or it might not; for, again, our grandfathers were in those matters strangely careless and indifferent. In any event the "liner" was certain to have some plausible explanation—such as that he had got the intelligence from a trustworthy police officer—and he would be able to gather in the resultant pennies. There is a story told that a hard-up "liner" once wrote a graphic and sensational account of his own suicide, which was

duly published, and then he coolly went round the next day and collected the "lineage," which amounted to a pretty fair sum.

Some years ago, before the labor question assumed its present importance, a band of Fleet Street "liners" created a bogus political agitation. They worked in the most systematic and ingenious fashion. Assembling in some favorite hostelry in the courts off the great newspaper thoroughfare, and giving themselves a high-sounding name as a political association—such as the "Labor League," the "Republican Association," or the "Tory Working Men's Association"—they made stirring speeches and passed significant resolutions on the burning political topics of the day. Reports of the meetings were sent to the morning papers, which, while the game was new, were invariably inserted, and, what is more, leader writers saw in them "the drift of public opinion." Copies of the resolutions were also forwarded to leading members of the Government and Opposition. Such of the acknowledgments of the resolutions as were not purely formal were also sent round to all the newspapers. Finally, any autograph replies received were disposed of to some dealer in autographs. Thus there was a triple profit on the transaction—first, the report of the meeting; next, the politicians' replies (both of which were paid for by newspapers that published them at the rate of a penny or three-halfpence a line); and lastly the sale of the autographs. This enterprising coterie of "liners," who displayed much ability and resource in the disguises they assumed for the purposes of their political meetings—being Conservative one night, Liberal the next, Republican another night—and the ruses they employed to make their fishing letters effective, repeatedly practised their arts with success on all the newspapers and on almost every



man of light and leading in the political movements of the time, until the dodge was discovered. But nowadays a trick of that kind is very infrequent. If it were attempted on any journal no more "copy" from the offending "liner" would be received; and if it were successful—if the report appeared in print—the "liner" might find himself in the dock on a charge of fraud, or at least he would be denied the "lineage."

There is one amusing phase of "lining" in vogue in London during the Parliamentary recess. It consists in obtaining expressions of opinion, through the post, from eminent politicians or other public men on vexed points of current politics or other matters of widespread interest.

Newspaper readers must often notice in the Press letters from men eminent in politics, science, art, and literature, in reply to anonymous correspondents. Our leading politicians figure in these communications most frequently. We read that Lord Salisbury, or Mr. Balfour, or Lord Rosebery, or the Duke of Argyll, or the Duke of Devonshire, as the case may be, has written a letter, in reply to a "correspondent" who called his attention to a statement made in some speech, or letter, or newspaper, and requested his views on the subject. "A correspondent" is, in almost every instance, a journalist, whose sole object is ascertaining the opinions of our leading politicians on current events in this manner is to turn an honest penny.

A "liner" sits down, and assuming the rôle of an ardent Radical, we will say, for the sake of illustration, writes an epistle, something like the following, to, say, Lord Kimberley, Lord Rosebery, or Sir William Harcourt:—

Honored Sir,—I am an humble working man. I am a Liberal and a Home Ruler. Imagine, then, my surprise and indignation to read in my Sun-

day paper a speech made by Mr. Balfour in which he declares that you, etc., etc.

The reader will guess the nature of what follows. The letter concludes with a request to the great man to whom it is addressed to send the writer a reply, and ease his mind on this important topic, at the earliest moment. He gets an answer to his letter in two cases out of three, and forthwith despatches copies of it, with a few introductory lines of an explanatory nature, to a large number of newspapers. A dozen copies of the letter are, as I have shown, easily made in one writing with the aid of "filmsies" and "black" and a stylus. If the reply of the leading politician is of interest or importance; if it deals with a phase of the political question occupying the public mind at the moment, it is pretty certain to be published by all the newspapers to which it is sent. The general rate of pay for matter of the kind is three-halfpence per line. Some newspapers pay only a penny a line, or 2s. 6d. or 3s. 6d. for the paragraph; but others pay 2d. a line, or give 5s. or 6s. for the paragraph. Three-halfpence per line is, however, the average rate of pay, and at that rate our friend, the ingenious and enterprising journalist, often obtains 3l. for the copies of the letter. Of course, if there be little or nothing of interest in the letter, no use is made of it in the newspaper offices, and it is consigned to the waste-paper basket. But the production must be very flat and unimportant to receive that fate. The correspondent rarely fails to get his "copy" accepted by some newspapers, especially at the season of the year which is known in Press circles as "the dull season," "the big gooseberry season," or "the sea serpent season," when there is little news, and particularly political news, going.

It may be asked, are the newspapers



acquainted with the way in which this news is obtained? Of course they are. The views of Lord Salisbury, or Lord Rosebery, or Mr. Balfour, or Mr. John Morley are certain to be of public interest on most subjects; and the newspapers are, as a rule, glad to obtain readable matter from any quarter so long as they know it is trustworthy and accurate.

Here is an example of how the game is played, culled from a recent issue of the Westminster Gazette, which it will be noticed, suspects the origin of the inquiry:—

Somebody, described as a "London Unionist"—may be a newspaper man in search of "copy"—has been calling the Marquis of Salisbury's attention to "the charges frequently made" (as the Daily Telegraph has it) "as to alleged collusion between the Conservative party and 'Labor' candidates." Lord Salisbury's correspondent, it seems, asked whether the responsible leaders of the party would countenance such an alliance, from which, he asserted, the rank and file of the party are absolutely averse.

Lord Salisbury replied as follows:—

Hatfield House, Herts.

Dear Sir,—I am desired by the Marquis of Salisbury to acknowledge your letter of the 31st, asking him as to "an alleged compact, or at least a tacit understanding," between the Conservatives (or Unionists) on the one hand, and on the other hand the clique now known as "Independent Labor." In reply I am directed to say that Lord Salisbury has never heard of the existence of any such compact, and believes the allegation to be entirely untrue.

Yours faithfully,  
R. T. Gunton.

But are our public men aware that the correspondent who seeks their views through the post is not a "faithful follower" or "an ardent admirer," as he professes to be, but an enterprising journalist desirous of increasing his income? It is hard to say. A few

are undoubtedly aware of the real object of the correspondent. It is a fact well known to politicians and journalists that, during a session of Parliament, a Minister often inspires a follower to ask a question in the House on some particular topic on which the right hon. gentleman desires to make a statement. In this way an opportunity for making a statement, which would not arise in the natural course of events, is created at question time in the House of Commons. In the same way a letter from a Minister often appears in the newspapers, saying his attention had been called to so-and-so by a correspondent, when it is probable he had received no such communication, but is anxious to make it appear he would never have noticed the subject except for the invitation of a third person. It is, therefore, likely that some, at least, of our public men see the journalist behind the correspondent. Indeed, it is probable they would never reply to those communications if they were not well aware the replies would be read in a day or two in the newspapers. A good many of them, however, never suspect the identity of their correspondent; they never see behind "the humble working man" or "the Conservative shopkeeper" a grinning "liner" in a tavern in Fleet Street with a gin or a whiskey before him. They would hardly notice some of the communications if they at all suspected their origin. But they are so touched by the fervent expressions of admiration and confidence, or by the earnestly expressed desire to arrive at the political truth by this working man—for the guise of an honest son of toil is very popular with our enterprising journalist—that they sit down and indite a most interesting letter; and it is only when they open their newspapers, a morning or two after at breakfast, and see the outpourings of their soul in cold print, that the scales fall from

their eyes and they know they have been "drawn."

Sometimes, indeed, our enterprising friend receives curt replies to his communications, but he makes "copy," and "good copy" too, out of them all the same. For instance, the following paragraph was published extensively a few years back:—

Sir Charles Dilke, M. P., speaking at a dinner at Coleford, Forest of Dean, on Thursday last, is reported to have said that the Foreign Office was about to abandon the policy of continuity in its dealings with foreign nations, and embark on a policy of change which would cause disquietude throughout Europe. A correspondent asked the Foreign Secretary whether the right hon. member for the Forest of Dean was not in error in making the statement attributed to him, and received the following letter in reply from Lord Rosebery's private secretary:—

38 Berkeley Square, W.

Sir,—I am desired by Lord Rosebery to acknowledge the receipt of your letter, and to state in reply that he finds it quite sufficient to answer for his own utterances without making himself responsible for those of others.

I am, yours obediently,  
N. Waterfield.

It is not so long ago, again, since "a correspondent" wrote to Mr. Gladstone, enclosing some remarks which Mr. Keir Hardie was alleged to have made in reference to the Liberal party, and he received the following reply, which he at once distributed amongst the newspapers:—

10 Downing Street, Whitehall.

Sir,—I am desired by Mr. Gladstone to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 23rd ult. and, with reference to the remarks of Mr. Keir Hardie to which you refer, Mr. Gladstone wishes me to say that he can hardly suppose those statements really to have been made; but, in any case, he has not time to spend dealing with them.

I am, Sir, your obedient servant,  
H. Shand.

Lord Randolph Churchill was a favorite mark for these communications. He invariably replied; and his replies were always what "the liners" call "spicy." He was once asked by a "liner"—who wrote in the guise of an ardent Gladstonian—for "proof of his recent assertion that Mr. Gladstone has 'often' made statements that are incorrect, and, when challenged to make good his assertions, has publicly and fully apologized," and sent the following reply:—

Sir,—I am directed by Lord Randolph Churchill to acknowledge the receipt of your letter. In reply to your question his Lordship would advise you to study with care Hansard's "Debates" for the last two Parliaments, as well as the speeches which Mr. Gladstone made in Midlothian and elsewhere. As it is perfectly evident that you are a person with little or nothing to do, this interesting study will prevent time from hanging too heavily on your hands, and at the same time cannot fail to improve your political knowledge and judgment.

I am, sir, yours obediently,  
Frank D. Thomas.

Then there is the ecclesiastical "liner"—the man who makes a speciality of supplying Church news. Mr. Charles A. Cooper, in his interesting work, "An Editor's Retrospect," relates that a "liner" of this kind was known in the newspaper offices as "the bishop-maker." When a See became vacant the "liner" always sent to the papers, within two or three days, a short paragraph, something like this: "It is stated that the bishopric of so-and-so will be conferred upon the Very Rev. Canon — or the Rev. Dr. —. The name of the Rev. Mr. — is also mentioned in connection with the appointment." The next day another paragraph would be sent, putting the matter a little stronger, as, "There is a decided manifestation of feeling in ecclesiastical circles in favor of the choice of" (a clergyman previously named) "to fill

the vacant See." Lord Palmerston was at that time the great dispenser of ecclesiastical patronage. The popular belief was that he was largely guided in his selections for bishoprics by the Earl of Shaftesbury, and the theory arose that the latter was influenced by the paragraphs in the papers. He thought they represented a real body of opinion, and in this belief he recommended one of the clergymen named.

There are also "fire specialists"—that is, journalists who make a speciality of describing the big blazes that occasionally occur in the Metropolis—specialists who devote themselves ex-

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clusively to the coroners' courts, the police courts, and the law courts; specialists who limit themselves to the collection of legitimate news of marriages, comings of age, balls, and assemblies of the upper ten thousand—a branch of work in which the female "lner" is now elbowing out the male "lner," for editors find a woman can do these festivities much better than a man—specialists in art and literary sales; specialists in sales of landed or house property; and specialists of other classes of work, all of whom, by this system of "lning," and—no, I will not add "lying"—manage to live.

*Michael MacDonagh.*

#### OF BIRDS' SONGS.

Common as birds are, their music ever in our ears, there is yet a haziness in the minds of many even musical people on the subject of their songs. No two songs, for example, can be less alike than those of the blackbird and thrush, and they sing all through the spring days (one of them sings through many a winter day, too); they may be heard in towns, they may be heard even in London; but I doubt if nineteen out of twenty of the many who listen to them with pleasure know one song from the other. And even those who have knowledge of out-of-door things, and who write lovingly and intelligently of them, seem to have been bewildered when they touched upon birds' voices. In Charles Kingsley's justly popular "Prose Idylls" is a paper entitled "A Charm of Birds," and I know nothing more happy than most of his descriptions of birds' songs. But one of these is at least misleading—his words, I

mean, upon the willow-wren and garden-warbler, "so alike in voice that it is often difficult to distinguish them unless we attend carefully to the expression." And then follow words which make me think the name of willow wren has been transposed for garden-warbler, and garden-warbler for willow-wren, or that the writer was not sure of his bird. "For the garden-warbler," he says, "beginning with high and loud notes, runs down in cadence, lower and softer, till joy seems conquered by very weariness; while the willow-wren, with a sudden outbreak of cheerfulness, though not quite sure . . . that he is not doing a silly thing, struggles on to the end of his story with a hesitating hilarity in feeble imitation of the blackcap's bacchanalian dactyls." Now, unless we transpose the names, this description is really misleading.

And yet, when we come to consider our English song-birds, their number

is not so bewilderingly large as to make the accurate knowledge of their music any very great task. Of the six hundred and odd birds which are included in Dresser's "List of European Birds," some three hundred and seventy-six species are on the list of British birds, and these are further reduced to two hundred, which are all that can fairly be called common. But many of these are sea-coast birds, and we may say roughly that hardly more than a hundred species are ordinarily to be met with along the roads and in the fields and woods of England, and of these not half are song-birds in the widest sense of the word. It would, then, seem no great task to make ourselves up in these few songs, certainly less than fifty all told.

May is undoubtedly the best month in which to begin this study. The leaves are not so thick as to be an obstacle to observation; the birds are singing as they will not do in the hotter and more busy June days; there are no young birds about in their perplexing suits to bewilder as in July and August. It is not always the best month in the year in point of weather. Often it is as cold as March; often come days when all growth and spring glow seem stopped by cloudy skies and bitter north-east winds, when the frozen palms of spring close over us once more; when the shining leaves of the hardy celandine look drooping; when the more delicate songsters will only sing on the sheltered, sunny edges of the woods, and even then sing hardly joyously; when we, too, begin to think that the charms of May are overrated, that the poets have sung of it in vain. But, take it for all in all, we find that the thirty-one days of May have done more to enlighten us in bird lore than have the days of any other month in the calendar.

But, on the other hand, some few

birds are singing in winter or in very early spring, and in that almost silence it is easy to become familiar with their songs, and thus have more time to spare for the spring arrivals. The bird which comes first on the list of English, and indeed of European birds, is one of those who dares to sing amid the bare, ruined choirs of the leafless trees. This is the missel-thrush—a most persistent singer, singing until late in the May twilight, and singing, too, in the wild winds and drenching showers of less pleasant February and March. If not a dweller in communities like the rook, yet as many as half a dozen pairs seem to frequent one shrubbery, building in the tall trees and shrubs within sight and sound of each other. To the song-thrushes it appears to have a curious antipathy, and to this I attribute the fact that those birds do not venture to lift up their voices in the shrubbery of which I am now thinking, and where the missel-thrushes choose to dwell. The song of the missel-thrush is a very powerful one. "rich and mellow" Seebohm calls it. To my mind there is a "scritch" in it, a harshness which recalls Milton's "scranne pipes of wretched straw." The length of the strain and the phrasing is very similar to that of a blackbird's song, but the whole performance is a wild parody of the blackbird's music. An observant bird lover described it as that of "a blackbird gone crazy," in a frenzy, and a blackbird without any of the sweetness of a blackbird's silvery, flute-like voice, or the thoughtful deliberation of its utterance. And I do not think the missel-thrush is a bird which has impressed its voice on the English mind as its wild, harsh joyousness perhaps deserves. None of the poets have sung of it, while the song-thrush, Shakespeare's throstle, and the throstle, too, of Tennyson after him, is loved with a love very

little short of that which we bestow on the nightingale. Even Newman could turn aside from more transcendent things to sing the charms of the "Winter Thrush;" and I think it must have been Wordsworth's favorite songster, and that it awakened more feeling in his mind than did the nightingale, which he dismisses, rather unceremoniously, indeed, in favor of the stock-dove. There are at least few lines in the poetry inspired by bird music which are more tenderly beautiful than those which he addresses to a thrush:

Thou thrush that singest loud, and  
loud and free,  
Into yon row of willows flit,  
Upon that alder sit;  
Or sing another song, or choose  
another tree.

"Loud and free" exactly expresses that jubilant lyric with no note of sadness in it and very little of tenderness, and which could only bring discord and an added grief to the sad heart of the listener.

And to turn to another poet. If any one who was unfamiliar with the thrush's song were to ask me how to distinguish it, I would say, "Read Tennyson's 'Throstle,'" and it will be unfamiliar no more. "The wild little" bird "poet's" song is enshrined in those few lines—their spirit, their rhythm, are there, and if we go out with that poetry in our minds we shall find no difficulty in recognizing at once and for ever that wild pæan of the spring, that song of exultation, of triumph, poured forth by the glad songster from some tall tree, and which seems to flood gladness around. "If winter comes, can spring be far behind?" asks Shelley; and though the thrush's song may be heard in November it brings all spring to our hearts.

The song of the blackbird is often classed with that of the thrush, but

unless contrast is a kind of relation, there is little reason for so bracketing them together. Indeed the blackbird's song is unique, as Drayton knew three hundred years before our day:

The woosel near at hand, that hath a  
golden bill;  
As nature had him mark'd of purpose  
t'let us see  
That from all other birds his tunes  
should different be.  
For, with their vocal sounds, they sing  
to pleasant May;  
Upon his dulcet pipe the merle doth  
only play.

The sound is indeed more instrumental than vocal, and if we want to recognize it we must dismiss from our minds the wild ode of the thrush, and listen, some early spring day, for a lay of which musing thoughtfulness is the chief characteristic. There is no hurry here, no careless rapture; it is a meditation, a soliloquy. The bird runs out its strains as if for its own amusement, its own fancy, careless of who hears it, full of tenderness too, and the sound liquid and soft as that of a silver flute. The *timbre* alters wonderfully towards the end of the summer, and beomes harsh, almost unmusical; and we recognize then the likeness between its voice and that of its wilder cousin, the missel-thrush, although the linked sweetness of phrase is never lost.

The two thrushes and the black ouzel have detained us long, but their voices are a prevailing item in spring music, the blackbird beginning its song almost before daylight (and it sounds sweeter in the silent dewy dawn than at any other time), the missel and song thrushes singing until late in the dusk of twilight. Of the ring-ouzel, which follows the thrushes in scientific lists, I might say much, for in the wild wastes on the mountain-sides of West Herefordshire which I am recollecting as I write these notes) it is common, and its

pleasant song, compounded of the songs of many other birds, is heard there all through the May days. But it cannot be classed among birds which are common throughout England, and therefore I pass it by and go on to the water-ouzel—though here, too, I might say we have a local bird to deal with. For "I am sixty-two," wrote Ruskin, "and I have passed as much time out of these years by torrent sides as most people, but I have never seen a water-ouzel alive." *Me felicissime!* for by the side of the babbling streams of that mountainous district which is to me Arcadia, I have spent much time in the glad company of what he calls the mysterious little water-ouzel. But in many places it is rare. A keeper fresh from Sussex had never seen it, and did not know its name, and it must be catalogued among those treasures which England holds only in its wilder nooks. In May it has almost ceased to sing, but every reach of our little river has its pair of birds, and their young ones, with speckled plumage and already white bills, are being initiated into the art of getting a livelihood. On every boulder we may see them curtsying in their automatic fashion with a drooping movement of one wing, and opening and shutting their white eyelids perpetually—a habit which I have not seen noticed by any writer. The sweet wren-like song of winter and early spring perhaps owes some of its charm to the music of the brook which accompanies it; that louder music frequently drowns the bird's voice, and makes it difficult to catch each note, but to those who haunt brook-sides, and know the bird by its characteristic plumage, the song, too, soon becomes familiar. In May a monotonous *chack, chack*, is all we hear of its voice; but if I were to stay to chronicle the call notes and the notes of alarm or pleasure which May

meetings with the birds reveal to us, this little monograph would quickly become a volume.

The brook reminds me (though now I am leaving scientific classification and making a great leap onward) that no kingfishers add their flash of blue and green glories to the beauties of these little streams; and to hear a sedge-warbler we must descend to the valley five hundred feet below this table-land, where there are those reed and willow beds which are necessary to its happiness. There any May afternoon we may hear the hurried grotesque chatter, and see the little brown bird with that unmistakable warbler stripe over its eye, flitting or climbing restlessly among the willow herb and bushes which follow the course of the stream. The creature is not shy, and we shall have time to notice that although it keeps among lowly things, reeds and rushes and underwood, there is yet a curious similarity of manner between it and the willow and wood warblers and the chiffchaff, birds which love the height and spaciousness of great trees. But no one can ever mistake its voice for that of any other bird; none so hurries and precipitates, or blends so strangely and deftly the notes of other birds with its own.

Before I leave the brookside I must say a word about my friends the sandpipers. They are a migratory race, and may be seen on many little streams in early and late spring, but it is only in the wilder districts that they make their nests as they do in this Arcadia. They are noticeable birds, and their flight is a remarkable one, a contrast to the straight, heavy flight of the water-ouzel, whose neighbors they are. It is sinuous as the course of the stream they frequent, and at first sight one might take them for swallows grown to an abnormal size. But their coloring corresponds



to that of the waterbrooks—it is gray as the boulders on which they stand, white as the foam around those boulders. Their song, uttered on the wing, consists of hardly more than three notes; and of them, too, as of the water-ouzel, we may say that to recognize that song we must get to know the birds and then go on to the song, because, unlike thrushes and black-birds, and many another bird, their music is not their characteristic; it does not force itself upon our ears; eyes will be first attracted by the pleasant flitting creature, or by its nest, shapely and neat, and hardly larger than the nest of a pipit, which nest it much resembles.

The wheatear, winchat, and stonechat in scientific lists follow the water-ouzel, but are hardly to be called songsters. They all have an unexpected way of finishing their short and rather sweet little warbling songs; but being birds of striking appearance we shall probably recognize them by sight first and then trace their songs home. The wheatear is a bird of the wild, uncultivated downs and wastes; the winchat loves gorse fields; the stonechat, too, likes something of wildness in its surroundings, but haunts desolate roadsides rather than wastes of open ground. Unlike the wheatear and the winchat, it remains with us throughout the year.

The redstart is a bird of gardens and orchards, and is known rather by its remarkable white, black, and chestnut plumage, and its bright blue eggs, than by its low song. That song bears, says Seebohm, "a striking resemblance to the loud and varied notes of the wren, and yet it wants their vigor and sprightliness, and is somewhat monotonous. It may be well described as a low, weak wren's song without any of that dashing vivacity which seems to be character-

istic of the music of that active little creature."

I suppose the robin's dreamy and very plaintive warble is familiar to every one. Perhaps most of us connect birds' songs with poetry, and if the thrush's song is a wild Pindaric ode, the robin's will rather recall the quiet English poetry of the seventeenth century. In that poetry a stanza with a short line at the close is very usual; and the robin, too, closes its sad little strains with a shortened cadence which is musical and plaintive.

And, leaving the robin, we find ourselves in the presence of the first of bird artists. Here comes a singer indeed, who has neither equal nor second. If its song is unknown to any who read this, I would say, wait until you hear music solemn and yet jubilant as ever came from bird; a voice of transcendent sweetness, variety, and with a supreme power of impressing itself on the very inmost fibre of our minds, and bringing us into some mysterious sympathy with things beyond our understanding; and when you hear it you may know you are listening to the nightingale. That song has been described over and over again; poets have loved to sing of it, and Milton, in his "O nightingale that on yon blooming spray," has, with his curious and accurate felicity, found just the word that expresses one of its chief charms — its "liquid notes." Wordsworth's

Those notes of thine, they thrill and pierce,  
Tumultuous harmony and fierce,

express other of its beauties. Keats' famous ode has in it less of the nightingale than of his own feeling on hearing the nightingale, but yet his epithet "full-throated ease," hits that carelessness of utterance, that unpremeditatedness joined with a supreme finish,

which places it above and beyond all bird artists. But if I were asked what is its best, its most wonderful achievement, I should say it was the marvellous crescendo on one note, almost human in its artistic perfection. This is "the one low piping sound more sweet than all" of Coleridge—Coleridge, who has so defended the bird against the charge of melancholy that all other defences can be but a plagiarism of his—

'Tis the merry nightingale  
That crowds and hurries and precipitates  
With fast, thick warbles his delicious notes.

Indeed, I do not know how the fable of the melancholy nightingale has crept into the minds of men; not only is the song exultant, but every movement of the bird is full of *verve* and joyousness.

The whitethroat, another of our spring arrivals, will make itself known to us, as we walk along the hedgerows, by flitting upwards and singing its very joyful, but a trifle monotonous, song as it flies, and then diving into the hedge and singing from that covert. It is a song which is difficult to diagnose, but here again we first recognize the bird, and the song soon becomes familiar to us. The lesser whitethroat is a bird of another habit, skulking among underwood, whence is heard its trill or shake, running on into a strain which resembles the song of a blackcap sung in an undertone. Seeböhm, however, likens it to the twittering of a swallow, but it is more hurried and vehement.

The blackcap ranks next to the nightingale without a doubt. Its extraordinary power, its jubilant quickness of utterance, its marvellous execution as well as the quality of the voice, must strike us at once; and it was a surprise to me that Mr. Bur-

roughs, in his beautiful idyl of English song-birds, calls it "a rare and much over-praised bird." With regard to the first of these adjectives, we must remember it is a relative one. In some districts the bird is really common—in some districts and in some seasons; but it seems to me that the song can hardly be over-praised. But when we say it comes next to the nightingale as an artist, we do not mean to say that its song bears any resemblance to that of the nightingale. Its strain is a more continuous warble, without those "flashes of silence" which make the nightingale's song so unique; it is a warble, and not an impassioned declamation.

Another of the *Sylvia* with a hurried, cheerful song is the garden-warbler, which we may hear from the underwood of some shrubbery or wilder wood. Unlike the more interesting *Phylloscopi*, who come next in scientific classification, it sings from one spot, from which it rarely strays, and to which it returns season after season. All birds migrate to a certain extent; but our summer migrants, those little, joyous incarnations of spirit who set forth on feeble wings, not knowing whither, at the bidding of an hereditary instinct to which they dare not be disobedient, are of all our birds surrounded with most of mystery and romance. But almost more wonderful to me is the fact that individual birds return to individual spots. To that tangle of wild rose-bushes at the edge of the wood, which the garden-warbler loved last year, it will return this year; there we shall listen for its joyous voice, and not in vain.

In March and April we may, perhaps, hear the tiny song of the tiny, golden-crested wren as it flits among the evergreens of the shrubbery or the many yew trees of our western hedgerows. But that song is little more than a sharp *tee-tee* ending in a

soft trill, inaudible unless we are close to it, and apt to be entirely passed over in May and June amid so many louder voices. The golden-crested wren is nearly related to the three *Phylloscopi*, birds with a curious individuality of their own; widely distinct as to their songs, but alike in color and in habit. The wood wren's voice is the most noisy and far-reaching of the three. It has two quite distinct songs, the first a monotonous yet musical whistle repeated rapidly five or six times, and sometimes running on into its other song, which begins with a *twice-twice-twice*, and ends in a very joyous trill. These loud, ringing notes are repeated again and yet again through a whole May morning, the tiny body of the singer absolutely quivering with the exertion which it repeats so untiringly. It is a most persistent singer, singing as it searches leaf after leaf of the tall trees, singing as it flits to another tree, singing if you approach its nest, singing as you depart from it. The strangely resonant and metallic notes of the chiffchaff are known to us all, for they bear no resemblance to the music of any other bird, except, perhaps, that of the great titmouse. As a rule, two notes only are the limit of its song, but sometimes I seem to hear a third added. One swallow may not make a summer, but one chiffchaff's ringing voice does make spring, and, moreover, it keeps up the spring feeling in our hearts long after spring has ceased to be, for the bird sings until late in the autumn. The willow wren's song has of late been much extolled by bird lovers, Mr. Fowler and Mr. Burroughs both praising it very highly. To me it is disappointing, thin in quality and little varied; but the "dying fall" at the end is really beautiful. It is almost an echo of the first notes—ethereal music hardly to be heard by mortal ears. And as with the three

other *Phylloscopi*, the form and color of the bird is very attractive, and wonderfully suited to the trees which it inhabits. Not that it is of their color, but it is a hue which takes their color, as a more exact match would not do—reflects the green, is flecked over with the shadows of the leaves; and the birds themselves are almost leaf-like in their motions as they flutter among the foliage or flit hither and thither as lightly as leaves dance in the wind. If these warblers are the birds designated as *Kakochrooi* and *Kakobioi* by Aristotle, we must resent both terms on their behalf, for they are singularly attractive little creatures both in color and in habits.

The sedge-warbler we have already considered, and our list of summer migrants closes with an exceedingly interesting, and in some districts, a rare, bird, the little grasshopper-warbler. Its song is so unusual, so unique, so monotonous, so unlike any other English bird's voice, that if once heard it is never forgotten. It consists only of a prolonged sound as of the reel of a fishing-rod quickly wound up, with alternations of loud and soft, as if a door were being opened and shut between the listener and the singer. To *see* the shy little creature will require more patience and perseverance than can be expected of any but a professional ornithologist, who is trained in habits of waiting long hours for one audience with one bird.

And next we come to a very homely bird—the hedge sparrow—singing among the low hedges, and in winter approaching human habitations and singing around them as it picks up crumbs with the house sparrows. It is a bird which is often passed over from its unassuming, quiet ways, but its sweet song and its gentle, trustful heart give it an interest and an individuality of its own quite apart from that interest which all these winged

darlings, who are free of that element into which we cannot rise, must inspire in us, even if they are only clothed in the dull brown, and only sing the homely little song of our hedge sparrow.

Whether the three titmice can be called songsters in any sense of the word, I feel doubtful. The sawing note of the great titmouse has been already noticed, and is quite unmistakable; the blue titmouse makes himself familiar by his pretty livery and his flitting antics, and his few rather unmelodious but very joyful notes soon become familiar too. The long-tailed titmouse, who consorts much with the golden-crested wrens in winter, is an exceedingly loquacious bird, and makes its presence quickly known by its *dicacité*, its pert, chirping prattle, but it has even less claim to the title of a song-bird than have its two larger cousins.

The wren's bright little poem, a mighty song for such a little creature, has a wonderful amount of animation and dash, and heard in the low winter sunlight is very welcome to us all. But it has little sweetness or modulation, and is one of those birds which are valued because they sing when days are dark "and ways are foul."

The wagtails do little more than utter a swallow-like twittering, and they are a family of birds which are difficult to distinguish owing to their changing winter and summer suits, and to their unfortunately misleading English names. We must therefore pass them over and turn to the pipits. The tree-pipit's song is unmistakable, loud, perhaps a little metallic, and reminding us now of a caged canary, now of a wild soaring lark. Lark-like, too, it loves to sing and soar, but rises, not from the ground, but from its perch on a tree near its nest. The meadow-pipit is a more engaging bird than the tree-pipit. Through the win-

ter, flocks of them abound in the waster pastures, and as early as February their wild, sweet, jubilant song is uttered flying or perching. At times, when hungry, I suppose, they let you come quite near enough to see their spotted, thrush-like plumage and their quaint crested heads, and at others a movement causes the whole flock to wing their way far from you.

Passing by the shrikes and the flycatchers, we come to the swallow twittering from its straw-built shed or from the telegraph wires, where it loves to sun itself and dress its blue feathers. Its song is too well known to need comment, and from its familiarity is often used as a sort of standard of other and less familiar songs. The notes of the martin bear some resemblance to those of the swallow, but it sings very seldom. Its "Dominican severity of dress, dark gray blue and white only," says Ruskin, "distinguish it from the swallow with its red cap and light brown bodice and much longer tail."

Turning to the finches, the goldfinch has little more than a musical twitter for a song, and its cousin, the linnet, warbles somewhat as does the swallow, but its voice is of a finer quality than that of the swallow. The chaffinch's pleasant little *chanson* is quite the most pervading of all spring songs, and is loved because it means warmth and sunshine and green trees. The greenfinch's song is quite unique—a long trill softly uttered, and a few warbled notes, are all its music, but they are unlike those of any other bird. They belong essentially to summer, as the chaffinch seems to belong to spring, and the charm of the performance, as Mr. Hudson says, is its "airy, subdued character, as of wind-touched leaves that flutter musically." It is a bird of shrubberies and orchards, and revels in warmth and sunshine. All our recollections of it are

connected with June and greenness; "a brother of the dancing leaves" the bird seemed to Wordsworth as he watched its careless happiness among his orchard trees. The bullfinch is better known by its sad, sweet call-note than by its feeble song, which is difficult to hear, and indeed can only be heard when we are near enough to the bird to distinguish it by its handsome plumage as well as by its soft, sweet song.

The buntings may also be dismissed with few words. The corn-bunting's queer song of few notes, uttered, as Mr. Seebohm says, as if with closed beak, is quite unmistakable, and so is the "depressed lumpy" form of the singer sitting on a telegraph wire or a hedgerow bush that overtops the lower hedge, and uttering its monotonous few notes hour after hour. More varied is the yellowhammer's song, and this, like the greenfinch's, is redolent of hot summer noons. It consists of six or eight descending notes, uttered rather hurriedly, and ending on a long note, or sometimes two long notes, which are generally lower in pitch than the preceding ones. It is a song which varies in different districts, and sometimes the last notes ascend instead of descending; and at times one or both of the long notes are omitted. It, like the brown bunting and whitethroat, is a roadside bird which seems to travel with us as we traverse our most frequented roads, and because its song is so familiar it is easy to note the variations. And it is one of the few songs which are easy to imitate by whistling, and which remain in our recollections as does some familiar air in music.

Need I say a word about the skylark and its wholly joyous song? It inspired one of Jeremy Taylor's most beautiful and best known passages—the lark rising from his bed of grass and soaring upwards singing as he

risks, and hoping to get to heaven and climb above the clouds; singing "as if it had learnt music from an angel as he passes sometimes through the air about his ministering here below." And it inspired too one of the finest odes in the English language, Shelley's finest work, his "supreme ode." But, as may be said of another ode, it is "not in tune with the bird's song, and the feeling it does and ought to awaken. The rapture with which the strain springs up at first, dies down before the close into Shelley's ever haunting melancholy." Like Keats' "Ode to the Nightingale," it is no key to the bird's song; it does not teach us anything of the thought and feeling which inspire that quivering, ascending embodiment of joyousness, that pilgrim of the sky, hiding itself in the glorious light of the summer heavens. The skylark may be heard as early as January—I heard it this year in November; as may also the rarer woodlark, whose song, uttered from trees or when flying, we recognize from its likeness to that of the skylark, though it lacks much of its rush and spirit and haste.

Can I call the starling a song-bird? It certainly seems as if it tried to achieve something of a song, and is of all our birds the most grotesque and original. It frequents human habitations and even towns, and there, sitting on a chimney or roof or bough, it utters queer chirps and whistles, imitations of a hundred sounds which it has heard as it listened to the *comédie humaine* of the yard or street in its vicinity. These notes are accompanied by contortions of its burnished iridescent throat and flappings of its wings, and are continued for half an hour or an hour at a time. It may be heard in winter as well as spring; for although in winter, as Dante knew, starlings gather into flocks and range wide over the country, one or two remain



in their old haunts, where they are sufficient for their own happiness. But these winter flocks are a great feature in the bare brown winter landscapes, and I suppose no reader of the "Divina Commedia" ever looks on them without recollecting,

Come gli storneli ne portan l'all  
Nel freddo tempo, a schiera larga e  
piena;  
Così quel fiato gli spiriti mali . . .

The cuckoo's song, musical in the distance, hollow and metallic when heard near at hand, is too well known to need description, and with it our list of English song-birds ends. But as we leave them, we remember "a thousand blended notes," not songs, but as musical as songs, because they bring with them recollections of green fields and solemn wild wastes, of brook-sides, or hedgerows—those tall hedgerows of Western Herefordshire which are so "succourful" to the cattle, as an old man remarked, and so attractive to the birds. The notes of the *Columbidæ* can hardly be passed over in these remembrances. The wood pigeon's swift, easy flight must be familiar to us all, and so must its song of five notes of unequal length *u---u* repeated again and again, and ending suddenly with one additional note thus *u---u-u*. "Take two-o cows, taffy," are the words that children of the Welsh border give it, and some of its notes are indeed very human. The stockdove's song is only a monotonous low cooing sound—dear to us for Wordsworth's poem; but the turtle-dove, a by no means uncommon bird in Herefordshire, has a very sweet, sad, cooing note of more delicate quality than that of the stockdove. And another bird with a very musical note, but no song, is the brown owl, which may be heard

incessantly in the dusk of the March evenings, but which, as far as my experience goes, ceases to be heard in May. This merry note, as Shakespeare calls it, is a long-drawn-out *hoo-hoo*, and can be imitated very successfully on a sweet-toned ocherina. The cry of the white or barn owl, though wild and therefore pleasant, is by no means of a musical quality. And while recollecting the birds of this unique district, I must not forget the strange note of the little quail, which may be heard from the grass fields of the valley below our more hilly land throughout the long nights of June. It resembles the syllables *put-put-put*, or the sound of water dropping slowly into a bucket; and musical as the sound is, it has to us the added charm of being but rarely heard in Western England.

Much more remains to be said indeed of those bird-notes which, although not of the nature of songs, are yet so pleasant to the ear: the crow of the pheasant, the startled whirl-r-r of the partridge, the curlew's wild whistle, "the tufted plover" piping "along the fallow lea," the fern owl's marvellous jarring note, the liquid bubbling cry of the wryneck, "sudden scratches of the jay," dear to us still in spite of the keeper—these and many other sounds are as musical to some of us as are the songs of more highly gifted birds.

"Little brothers and sisters" said St. Francis lovingly to the winged chatterers who thronged around him; and as we wander through fields and lanes we too may well wish that we could learn the secret of that attractiveness which drew to him those joyous little spirits of the air, whose music makes this earth "an unsubstantial faery place."



## THE MAKING OF THE DICTIONARY.

It is customary to regard the dictionary as a necessary evil. Many buy it because it is a thing no well-regulated household should be without. Most consult it grudgingly; the voluntary pursuit of learning is dying out now that we are all so stuffed with knowledge. And to those who have survived the ordeal of a finished education, there may perhaps appear to be a tincture of injustice in the insistent claims of the dictionary. A language which should be "self-interpreting" is what is wanted in these busy days. The makers of English, too, indulged in most discreditable vagaries. In the search for additional words they seem to have ransacked the earth, to the terror and perplexity of their descendants. There is, however, an alternative view, which casts no slur upon our forebears. Is our education so complete? Had there been less of Greek and Latin in the class-room and more of our mother tongue, we must have leaned upon the dictionary less.

It is significant, at any rate, that when the promoters of the New English Dictionary began to look about for assistance, they found British Universities apathetic, or at best but mildly interested. Their professors were too busy with the dead languages. The promoters turned to the United States. There the English language is studied scientifically, and American scholarship at once responded to the appeal. Professors read for it and interested their pupils in the undertaking. When the Syndic of the Cambridge University Press was asked to undertake its publication, they politely declined. The delegates of the Oxford University Press consented. These delegates—amongst whom were Mark Pattison and Dr. Stubbs, now Bishop of Oxford

—may be said to have retrieved the reputation of our academies.

The New English Dictionary is an enterprise without precedent, and its value can scarcely be overestimated. It will help to make the last quarter of the nineteenth century notable in literary history. Not that this century will see its finish, that will not be before 1910 at the earliest. Yet it was in fact projected thirty-seven years ago, when Dean Trench read a paper before the Philological Society on the necessity of supplementing the then existing dictionaries. The Society resolved to undertake the work. The committee soon found that it was not a supplement which was wanted, but a new dictionary. For a time there was uncommon activity. Mr. Herbert Coleridge, a grand-nephew of the poet, was appointed editor, and some hundreds of readers got to work. Mr. Coleridge died, Dr. Furnivall succeeded him, but the interest had already slackened. When Dr. Murray—now joint editor with Mr. Henry Bradley—was appointed, it was not even a failing cause—it was a cause which had failed. Dr. Furnivall had thought the best thing would be to hand over the materials to the British Museum. There were futile negotiations with unwilling publishers; they would have condensed it till it was worthless; they could see no profit otherwise. They were doubtless right. It was fortunate that the Oxford Press then recognized its responsibilities, for there was no hope in any other quarter. They took some time in giving a favorable decision, for Oxford has obvious limitations. Some delegates disapproved of the dictionary being edited by any other than an Oxford man. But when they came to look there was no Oxford man who

could do it. Finally, Dr. Murray's qualifications so impressed the majority, that when he hesitated they said they must have him for editor or they would go no farther.

He got together thirteen hundred readers and thirty sub-editors. It would take twelve years to finish the work, he believed then. He soon found he had been too precipitate. Dr. Johnson thought his dictionary would take three years; it took nearly three times three. Webster toiled at his for twenty-four years.

And though we have grown to regard Johnson's Dictionary with a modified respect, he was still without doubt a great dictionary-maker. His reputation lasted so well that in the "fifties" readers for the New English Dictionary passed his quotations without verification. They do so no longer; for, in fact, the great lexicographer had often a slipshod way with him. Sometimes he is at fault in the text of the quotation, sometimes in the author. There is no doubt now that the Doctor frequently quoted from memory. A dictionary-maker with a sense of humor must be sometimes at a loss for an outlet. The Doctor was not, he loosed it in his pages. "Grub Street"—he writes—"the name of a street in London, inhabited by the writers of small histories, dictionaries, and temporary poems." A lexicographer he defines as—"a writer of dictionaries, a harmless drudge."

However, he gave us a splendid lead for a very poor reward—fifteen hundred pounds, out of which he had to pay his six assistants. By the way, in spite of his antipathy to Scotsmen, five of the six came from over the Border. They sat round the table in Gough Square, whilst Johnson sat in a chair upon it, so that he could overlook them.

Gough Square and the home of the New English Dictionary are in striking contrast. It is one of a row of pleas-

ant villas stretching away out of Oxford to the north. The colleges have been left far behind; it stands, in fact, on the confines of the town. There is nothing to mark it above its fellows; nothing in the neighborhood which is not common to the suburbs of scores of small provincial towns. It has an agreeable air of drowsy prosperity about it; no one would suspect it of energy or enthusiasm. There is evidence in the house itself that the owner is a man with a taste for philology, but nothing more. Dr. Murray himself asserts that his tastes are scientific, and if ever he formerly looked forward to a release from pedagogy, it was with the hope of devoting himself to one or other of the branches of natural science to which his heart was given. Yet what better qualification for a lexicographer could there be than the scientific habit? He was second master at Mill Hill—"the Wesleyan Eton" as it has been called—when invited to undertake the editorship. That his prospects would be improved by the change was more than doubtful, but the call was an imperative one. He, as President of the Philological Society, and Examiner in English for the University of London, knew the national loss which would be incurred if the publication were indefinitely postponed. So he compromised, devoting some hours to the school and some to the dictionary. This division of time and interests soon became impossible, and he removed to Oxford, the dictionary absorbing him entirely. His name betrays him as a Scotsman. He was for some years Principal of the Academy at Hawick, and is regarded as an authority on the antiquities and natural history of his native Teviotdale. He has also made some notable contributions to the history of the Scottish language and its dialects.

Overwhelming proofs of the dictionary are not wanting in the garden be-

hind the house. There stands the laboratory, or Scriptorium, as it is called. It is externally disappointing. The truth must be told: it is what the wits call a "tin tabernacle." "Of all manner of churches thus idiotically built, iron churches are the damnablest to me," says Ruskin; the rumbling of those thunders has not yet died away. But Mr. Ruskin is an art critic mainly. A political economist? That is open to question. And this is a matter of economics. An iron building is cheap, is a protection against fire, and is removable at will. Granted that it is hopelessly ugly, these considerations remain much to the point.

The scheme within is simplicity itself. Tables and desks, and along the walls row upon row of pigeon-holes, more than a thousand of them, full of slips. Every one of these slips has passed or will pass through the hands of five helpers, and four assistants at the tables are constantly at work sorting and classifying them. They contain the quotations; approximately a million of them go to the ton; there are about six tons of them. It would take you thirty years to look through them at the rate of one a minute. That only a million will be used in the dictionary gives one the impression that things are not so bad after all. Yet, as a matter of fact, the saving of labor would be immense if the whole of the six tons could be printed. As it is, they have all to be weighed in the balance. Then, when the best have been selected, they must be made of a convenient length; for the dictionary is limited to eight times the size of Webster.

On slopes against the wall and on shelves are ranged the works of reference: dictionaries, ancient and modern, in many languages. There is the work of Master Henry Cockran, wherein "all such as desire to know plenty of the English" are invited to the story of the crocodile, "who, hav-

ing eaten the body of a man will, in fine, weep over the head." From this natural and common habit of the crocodile comes the phrase "crocodile tears." There is the dictionary "according to Crocker"—for that excellent mathematician was a dictionary-maker besides, and Johnson's own copy of the "Anatomy of Melancholy," with his annotations for his dictionary, some of them very characteristic.

We are able, however, to go back much earlier than Crocker or Cockran, and come to the gloss. The glosses of the Anglo-Saxon psalters are the ancestors of the dictionary. These were explanations of difficult words given side by side with the text. From the gloss was evolved the glossary, an independent list of words, which was probably learned by heart. In the pictorial vocabulary of about the same period art came to the assistance of letters. But the first dictionaries were avowedly designed for women and children, though the standard of knowledge at the time could not have been so high but that the men sometimes found them useful.

But perhaps the most interesting book of them all is the Littré dictionary. It is not a bibliographical curiosity, but a proof of what a man of genius and purpose can do when he sets his heart upon it. Littré was the prince of lexicographers. His dictionary contains five thousand closely-printed pages. He gives the biography of every French word, its etymology, and illustrations of its use from authors of the seventeenth, eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. He received little or no help from outsiders and read nearly all the books himself, whilst his wife and daughters did most of the copying. The collection of the materials took him thirteen years, and thirteen more were swallowed up in printing and revising them.

The slips which line the Scriptorium came from all parts of the world; from

France and from Florida, from Algeria and Amsterdam, from Upper Egypt, Stockholm, Rome, Florence and Japan. Amongst the early readers there are many distinguished names: Rossetti, Hazlitt, Perowne, Lubbock, Littledale, Lightfoot, Lushington, Craik, Page-Hopps, and Dowden. More than one hundred thousand books have been read and extracts made. It took two assistants three years, working eight hours a day, to sort the material transferred to Dr. Murray by the Philological Society. He sent out circulars to the registered contributors, five hundred of them—four hundred and fifty came back through the dead-letter office!

Twenty-six sub-editors had been originally appointed, one for each letter of the alphabet. Nearly one-half of these were dead. From executors and survivors, however, quotations came tumbling in by the ton, unearthed from lumber-rooms, from cellars, from garrets, and from cupboards. They came in cases, in trunks, in hampers, in baskets. There were trunks of nouns and bundles of verbs, sheaves of conjunctions and parcels of adjectives. In every conceivable form of package—even an old bassinet full, containing, too, a mouse and her family, reared on parts of speech! But the slips of *Pa* could not be found, nor the sub-editor responsible for them. With infinite difficulty he was traced from place to place till it was ascertained that he had last resided in County Cavan. There he had died, and there in a loft over a shed the missing words were found.

It must be understood that these sub-editors and readers have given, and still give, their services without fee or reward. To pay for preparing the materials for such a work would be a manifest impossibility. But the honorary worker has obvious defects. Some who responded to the appeal promised largely and performed nothing,

others did a great deal and it was useless. Literary men of unquestioned ability and proved performance could not so much as transcribe a quotation accurately or give an author's name correctly. The amount of work done by individual readers was ludicrously disproportionate. Out of three hundred and sixty-one thousand slips, nineteen thousand came from one reader alone, eleven thousand from another, and ten thousand from a third. And there were more than seven hundred readers during that particular year. The correspondence entailed in keeping them at work was in itself a huge matter. From thirty to forty letters a day had to be written. Altogether not less than two thousand people have had a finger in the pie.

The conditions have happily changed since then. The chief work at present consists in sorting and classifying the material. New books and new editions, it is true, come out now and again, which must be read. But a trained band of some hundred men and women undertake all that is required. Now that the stress of dealing with incompetent human material has passed, Dr. Murray is able to say that, after all, their experiences of the kind have been by no means unusual. The brothers Grimm, when they set about starting the great German dictionary, appealed for readers and received offers of help from only eighty-three persons. Six only of them proved able to give any real assistance, and of these only one came up to the editors' standard!

The scope of the New English Dictionary is wider than that of any of its predecessors. It includes all words, not only those belonging to modern English, but those which are archaic and obsolete. It is enriched with quotations from the earliest written records down to the present time. Dr. Johnson despised derivation, Horne Tooke

definition: in the new dictionary derivation and definition go together; in fact etymology is for the first time assigned its full honors in the history of words. It has been found necessary to set a limit to the inclusion of dialect words. Material for their proper treatment was not in existence, and you cannot be continually altering the plan of a work which has been on the stocks a quarter of a century. Dialect words of classic origin are given, and for the rest there is Dr. Wright's Dialect Dictionary in progress, which treats the subject in the fittest way, that is, geographically.

By a curious inversion the longest words come to have the briefest treatment in the New Dictionary. That this should be so is natural enough. Our ancestors had not the taste, or indeed the necessity, for long words. They have been recently introduced, chiefly for scientific and technical uses. They have no history worth mentioning, and no inflections, and are therefore easily dealt with.

There are, on the other hand, monosyllabic verbs, contemporary with English history, and which are infinitely inflected: such words as *go*, *get*, *come*, *be*, and *do*. Dr. Murray was at one time under the impression that *let* would be the longest of them. He refuses to commit himself now, for *get* and *go* will certainly take a great deal of beating. Words like these are used in such an extraordinary number of senses, and have had so varied a life history, that their treatment often extends to many pages. There are prepositions, too, of ancient lineage, such as *by*, *on*, and *that*, whose claims are almost as formidable.

The dictionary has been the subject of letters from Tennyson, George Eliot,

Good Words.

Stevenson, J. R. Lowell, and Mr. Andrew Lang. They are for the most part replies to inquiries as to the significance of some word which they used. Stevenson was applied to as to the word "brean," which had turned up in one of his breathless tales. To which Mr. Stevenson replied that he was sorry to say that he had not read the proofs of the book, but "brean" was plainly a misprint for "ocean!" And he goes on to show, by an example, how his handwriting made this possible. George Eliot was asked whether she wished to go down to posterity as George Eliot; she replied in the affirmative.

There have been not a few protests against the introduction into the dictionary of what some correspondents have been pleased to call "Americanisms;" in many cases the words objected to were good English centuries ago. Fallen out of use in this country, they have been preserved over sea, and have come to us again, to be coldly received as strangers. It is not the intention of the present editors to follow Dr. Johnson's arbitrary mode of inserting only such words as he thought good and fit.

The dictionary-makers of other countries have not been chary of their admiration; they have shown it in the sincerest way by following many of the improved methods of the new undertaking. The promoters of the new Swedish dictionary sent one of their editors to see how the thing was done; he went back with a full note-book. The enterprise has also given a spur to Continental lexicographers, and dictionaries of moment in Holland, Germany, and other countries are either begun or beginning.

Leonard W. Lillingston.

## THE WESTERN PIONEER.

I can hear the willows whispering, 'way down the Arctic  
slope,  
Every shivering little leaflet gray with fear;  
There's no color in the heavens, and on earth there seems no  
hope,  
And the shadow of the winter's on the year.

An' it's lonesome, lonesome, lonesome, when the russet gold  
is shed,  
An' the naked world stands waiting for the Doom;  
With the northern witch-fires dancing in the silence overhead,  
An' my camp-fire just an island in the gloom.

When the very bears are hiding from the Terror that's to  
come,  
An' the unseen wings above me whistle south;  
When except the groaning pine-trees and the willows, Nature's  
dumb,  
And the river roadway freezes to its mouth.

But I cannot strike the home trail. I would not if I could,  
An' I want no other's smoke across my sky;  
When I drop, I'll drop alone, as alone I've allus stood.  
On the frontier where I've led, let me lie.

I wouldn't know men's language, I couldn't think their  
thought,  
I couldn't bear the hurry of mankind;  
Where every acre's built on, where all God made is bought,  
And they'd almost make a hireling of the wind.

I've been allus in the lead since I grew grass high,  
Since my father's prairie schooner left the Known  
For a port beyond the sky line, never seen by human eye,  
Where God, and God's creation dwell alone.

'Way back I heard men callin'; one woman's voice was fond,  
An' the rich lands towards harvest murmured "Rest."  
But a sweeter voice kept callin' from the Unexplored Beyond,  
A wild voice in the mountains callin' "West."

I heard it in the foothills—then I climbed the Great Divide;  
In the canyon—then I faced the rapids' roar;  
In the little breeze at dawning, in the dusk at eventide,  
The voice that kept a-callin' went before.



My crooked hands are empty, my six-foot frame is bent,  
There ain't nothing but my trall to leave behind,  
An' the voice that I have followed has not told me what it  
meant,  
An' the eyes that sought a sign are nearly blind.

But I hear it callin' still, as I lay me down to rest,  
An' I dream the Voice I love has never lied,  
That I hear a people comin', the Great People of the West,  
An' maybe 'twas His Voice callin' me to guide.

The Spectator.

Clive Phillippo-Wolley.

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### THE TRUE SIGNIFICANCE OF "A. K. H. B."

It is evident that the tragic misadventure which last week ended in the sudden death of the best known and least "typical" of Scottish ministers has created a profounder impression than the death itself. "That event," to use A. K. H. B.'s characteristic euphemism, had been expected at least twice within the past few years. The first of his two very serious illnesses was lacking in no element of pathos. It all but robbed him of life; it did rob him of his first wife, his assiduous and self-sacrificing nurse. Either of the two deaths that were, apparently with good reason, anticipated, would have seemed an appropriate and not ungraceful end to such a career as Dr. Boyd's. But there is something violent as well as painful, inartistic as well as unexpected, in this dying of one of the crudest of poisons, in this stretching out the hand to find the means of prolonging sleep, and finding only the means of shortening life. It suggests some wanton outrage, like the shattering by a schoolboy's stone of the little bit of Sèvres which, come from no one knows where, is to be found among the precious treasures that lie hid in the "ben" of the weaver of "Thrums." Yet the tragedy has given to the melancholy solemnities of this week in St. Andrews

precisely that flavor of profundity in sympathy, which, unmarked by anything of the nature of demonstrativeness, distinguishes a public funeral in Scotland from a funeral anywhere else. For even north of the Tweed—or, perhaps, more there than anywhere else—the suspicion was entertained that the too often bitingly effective *raconteur* had at the best but half a heart, that the Country Parson, even although he might not be positively insincere, never quite got rid of artificiality even when he was penning his "graver thoughts," that he was absolutely without the fundamentally Scottish and ever-present earnestness of *sunt lacrimæ rerum*. But the disaster, swift and sudden, in the Bournemouth lodging has altered all that. It has been "poor Boyd" all this week, and the future reader of "Recreations" and "Twenty-Five Years of St. Andrews" will, when he is a little wearied if not irritated by minute dissertations "concerning Smith's drag," or by details of the constituents of the lunch the author gave to this or that "dear man" who visited him, bethink him once more of "poor Boyd," and relapse into that gentle pensiveness which is divided by the thinnest of partitions from fraternal sympathy.

The peculiar and almost provoking

fascination which A. K. H. B. has for more than a generation exercised over the minds not only of the tens of thousands who in all parts of the Anglo-Saxon world—as he records with complacent gratitude in his diary—have bought his volumes of miniature sermons, but over critics who have found him “a bundle of affectations” and “woefully lacking in spirituality,” is due to the unique and isolated position he holds at once among English essayists and among Scottish ministers. As a minor moralist and diarist, he has been compared at once to Tupper and to Pepys. One can easily recall certain “points of contact” which suggest both writers. But the one comparison is distinctly unjust to A. K. H. B.; the other is unjust both to him and to Pepys. It is true that he prattles commonplaces, more especially in those earlier volumes which brought him his vogue, with a facility which recalls the “Proverbial Philosophy.” But these commonplaces, whether of actual experience or of religious and moral deduction from experience, have the indubitable air of reality—though it may be of eminently petty reality. Tupper, on the other hand, is so very exasperating because his generalities seem to have no connection with actual life. It is as clear that they might have been written at any time as that they are not written for all time. A. K. H. B. notes, too, the little incidents of everyday existence, and especially the intrusions of external nature and its eternal processes upon man’s purposes, almost as carefully as does Pepys in the midst of his scandals and his sorrows, or even as does Laud himself in the thick of his pedantic follies, his insane cruelties, his fatuous preparations for martyrdom. Reading “Twenty-five Years of St. Andrews,” and the less satisfactory volumes which followed it, one can almost say in advance at which page it will be recorded that the first

easterly “haar” has settled on the links, and when the first rosebud of the season will be seen by the author as he saunters down to write letters and glance at the newspapers in the Royal and Ancient Club-house. But he has none of Pepys’ appalling capacity for personal revelation, for “that indecent exposure of self-consciousness” which is his weakness as a man and his strength as a literary classic. A. K. H. B. may even be garrulous in his egotism. There is occasionally a suspicion of dubious taste in his thinking aloud about himself, about his Scottish contemporaries like Caird and Tulloch, Shairp and Macleod, about “dear” and “good” men from England like Stanley and Froude, Helps and Bishop Thorold. He is deficient in that dignity of official position which never deserts Dr. Jessopp, to whom, indeed, as a Country Parson, he can no more be compared than an average rural naturalist whose papers appear in the “Transactions” of a provincial Society can be mentioned in the same breath with White of Selborne. Yet A. K. H. B. knew when to draw in, or rather when to button up his egotism. He is never to be seen in *deshabille*, seldom even in mufti. He may be the Country Parson, making calls upon his parishioners, and showing that there is a community of interest between himself and them, yet he never forgets or allows them to forget the relationship between them. Still, the number of folk who do not wish to be troubled about the deeper things of the spirit and at the same time like to see an interest taken in the smaller emotions of conventional life, is enormous. This public A. K. H. B. made his own, at least for a time. He attained this position, too, without resorting to any of the tricks of the literary trade. In one of his essentially autobiographical letters to a critic he tells how he made up his mind while a very young man

that if he ever became a preacher he should aim above all things at being "interesting." He succeeded, and he carried the same theory into the practice of essay-writing. He may be superficial and conventional; but he *is* interesting. He is a master of the short sentence, a believer in the doctrine that good writing ought to be good—and cultured—talk. His "philosophy" is no more oppressive than his diction. He can, when he chooses, be gently sarcastic; he is invariably cheerful. He is as hopeful as Emerson, and can be understood of the common Philistine, which Emerson cannot. Thus, A. K. H. B. had in his lifetime no rival near his throne. Nor will he have a successor.

A. K. H. B. holds an equally isolated position among Scottish preachers. He was not a great ecclesiastical force or party leader. He had a certain sympathy with the Latitudinarian movement in the Scottish Church, of which his friend Principal Tulloch was the leader. He had—in virtue of his fastidiously artistic nature he could not help having—even keener sympathies with the agitation for æstheticising Church worship and services, which was begun by the late Dr. Robert Lee, of Greyfriars Church, Edinburgh, which has filled Scotland with organs, and which seems destined to flood it with prayer-books. But he never pretended to be—and could not have been even if he had pretended—the spokesman of a High Church or of a Broad Church party. For such a task he had neither the adequate amount of enthusiasm nor the adequate skill in organization. He cherished and never disguised his liking for the ways and the methods of the Anglican Church. Whenever he had a chance, he dated a letter on Good Friday or Easter Monday, on Shrove Tuesday or Ash Wednesday. He was the intimate friend of more than one well-known prelate. It

has been often said that he would have been in his element as a bishop. This is probably a great mistake. He would unquestionably have looked the part to perfection. Yet his lack of organizing faculty and perhaps, also, of the art of managing men, would have made him absolutely useless as a prelate, at least during such a period as the present. He would have been impotent—and a source of impotence to his ecclesiastical inferiors—in presence of such a crisis as that which threatens to destroy the Church of England, or to save it only by means of disestablishment. The truth is that if Dr. Boyd was anything more than himself—the sufficiently notable and interesting A. K. H. B.—he was a survival, with nineteenth-century variations, from eighteenth-century Moderatism—the Moderatism of Robertson and Blair, of "Jupiter" Carlyle and Burns' friends the Ayrshire "Auld Lichts," the Moderatism which was submerged by the perfervid Evangelicalism which in 1843 established the Free Church of Scotland. It is true, as has been already said, that he was a Moderate with modern variations. He made his sermons "interesting," and to that extent there was no affinity between them and what the late Principal Caird, although no friend of Evangelicalism, styled, when speaking of the pulpit efforts of Dr. Hugh Blair, "the frigid cento of prudential maxims, correct platitudes, colorless panegyrics of virtue and lukewarm exhortations to what was termed 'rational and sober piety.'" But Dr. Boyd, like the divines from whom anything in the shape of apostolic succession can alone be traced in his case, kept his sermons free not only from unctuous pietism, but from spiritual fervor and the enthusiasms of simple and orthodox faith. Like many, too, of the better Moderate ministers—like the best of them all, Dr. Davidson, in "Ian Maclaren's" annals of Drum-

tochty—he was a singularly faithful and vigilant parish minister, greatly esteemed by the members of his congregation for his assiduity in keeping in touch with them and their lives through informal visitations. A. K. H. B. will, as a personage in the Church and in

*The Speaker.*

literature that had the courage of his egotism and his foibles, not be soon forgotten in Scotland or even in England. The memory of Dr. Boyd will long remain green in the parish of St. Andrews, where his best and least-known work was accomplished.

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### PROVIDENCE AND CATASTROPHES.

The terrible explosion at Toulon raises once more the old, old question, Why does God permit such events to happen? It is not likely that the modern man by searching will find out God any more than those Eastern men whose speculations recorded in the Book of Job have expressed the thoughts and yearnings of countless generations of mankind. We can only restate the eternal problem, and suggest conclusions which have been suggested before, but which are always capable of restatement. Here are scores of innocent people killed and injured (some of the latter for life) by an unforeseen and sudden catastrophe, due either to "accident" or, as is whispered, to some diabolical act of treachery. How can it be justified? If society puts to death the man who causes acts like this, must we not impeach the Providence which permits the act and sustains the arm of the miscreant who effects it? The question is still asked by men whose faith in a divine and beneficent order is shocked by the occurrence of a tragedy which overtakes innocent victims, and who ask in the desolation of their souls, Can God be just?

The first answer which occurs to the mind when this problem is raised is whether the negation of a divine Providence is of any help. If the tragedy was all without purpose, if it was

merely due to molecular action uncontrolled by any supreme spiritual power, are we any further? Does the agnostic gain anything on that hypothesis? Obviously he does not, for he admits that matter is triumphant, and that the noblest aspirations of the noblest human soul may be cancelled by a mere physical act. The idealist (we use the term to cover all believers in a divine order) holds the faith that not a sparrow falls to the ground without the divine will, that "nothing walks with aimless feet," that death is not the final fact in life, but only an inevitable means of transformation to a higher plane of life. Faith can meet the catastrophes of life with a firm hope that the merely subjective impressions which a finite being entertains of these catastrophes is not, and cannot be, identified with the objective facts as seen by an infinite intelligence. Thus the sceptic really gains nothing by his scepticism; the actual fact is to him just as terrible as to the believer, while the latter finds a hidden clue to the mystery which is sealed to the former. That a mere sudden chemical combination, itself without thought and controlled by no thought, irresponsible, regnant, a final fact in Nature, should exercise the power of absolutely destroying that wonderful piece of work called a man, of cancelling his will, intellect, soul

in a moment, and of wiping his personality out of the universe, is a thought so horrible, so unbearable, that if it were really believed by the bulk of the human race, madness on a gigantic scale would inevitably follow. We are kept sane by a reasonable faith that all we see, as Wordsworth says, is "full of blessings."

But, in the next place, it is worth noting that it is only the unusual tragedies of the world that call forth expressions of doubt or positive unbelief. "Every moment dies a man," and yet this constant passage of souls into the unknown produces no impression. It is only when wholesale death within a given area takes place, that men's minds are swayed by unbelief. The earthquake at Lisbon, we know, seriously affected the religious thought of Europe; though, we must recollect, it affected Europe at a time when faith was at a low ebb. But why should such an event affect the minds of men who profess, above all things, to be governed by reason? These men know how the crust of the earth is composed, they know of the volcanic formations, they know that if you build on these you must be prepared to take the consequences. They do not expect that letters of warning shall be traced by divine power on the sky; the uniformity of Nature is the very fundamental article of their creed. So much for the naturalness of the catastrophe. But there is the subjective human side. Well, every one at Lisbon, every one at Toulon, had to die at some time; why not in one way as soon as in another? Is it worse to die suddenly than to die after months and years of protracted suffering? Is not the most painless death, so far as we can guess, the instantaneous death by a stroke of lightning? The victims at Toulon felt one tremendous shock and all was over. But the victim of consumption in some dark city slum suffers a daily

death, as it were; the patient in a cancer hospital can tell of a lingering agony which the thousands engulfed at Lisbon or in Ischia never knew. We need not for the moment, to use the words of Herodotus, carry up our story into the unseen world. Taking the facts as given here, we can only say that it is a vulgar illusion which strains at the Toulon explosion as being inconsistent with divine Providence, and yet swallows without difficulty the single, common, every-day tragedies of human life.

But are there not, then, tragedies in life? It may be asked. Undoubtedly there are, but the tragedy is a thing of the soul, not of the body. Agamemnon, Hamlet, Othello are not subjects of tragedy because of any misfortune which has happened to their bodies or to their material goods; when we think of them we never think of these things, which in the long procession of the ages are matters of absolute indifference. It is in the maimed or impotent soul, in the degraded character, that tragedy consists. Think of Shakespeare making the ground of tragedy the fact that the hero had broken his leg or lost a fortune! No, the souls in hell are there because, as Danie said of Epicurus, they have lost spiritual good. There, and there alone, is the groundwork of life's tragedies. What, then, it will be asked, are we to express no regret, no grief for these occurrences which shock the world? Now, we do not say that, for grief is natural to man, and it purges his nature and sweetens his character, so long as it does not degenerate into futile, hopeless melancholy. We are but men, and we needs must grieve with our fellow men, either when sitting by the bed of suffering or hearing of the harrowing incidents in which scores of human beings are involved in what we cannot help, from our point of view, in regarding as a dire catastrophe. But we

must always remember that grief is a pure expression of our point of view, which is limited, partial, finite. We know but a tiny segment of a vast circle. Within our little creek, to use Carlyle's simile, we have the minnow's right to say what we find there. But beyond that creek is the river, and beyond that the infinite sea; shall we, in our self-important littleness, dare to say what boundless possibilities are there? Who knows that the human soul called hurriedly from this little earth may not be needed in "the sounding-house vast of being?" What beneficent fate may not have been in store for those on whom the Tower of Siloam fell? In an infinite universe there are infinite possibilities. Let us recall to our minds the meaning and methods of the ever-renewed process of creation as the best suggestions of science and religion reveal them to us. From a merely subjective point of view, Nature seems "red in tooth and claw;" but Dr. Alfred Russel Wallace, writing as a man of science, tells us that, given sentient life, he cannot conceive of a universe capable of yielding a greater sum of enjoyment to every living being. We shudder to see the hawk

swooping on the pigeon, or the snake holding the bird by its deadly fascination; but, as a matter of fact, we have every reason to believe that the victim in either case dies without pain. Once admit a world like ours to be gradually evolved, once admit the fact of sentient life climbing to higher and yet higher grades until it forms a vehicle for the expression of mind, and we see that facts are necessitated which, from our subjective standpoint, seem terrible. But even then one of these facts is no more terrible than another, and the death of a tiny child is as tragic as the death of a thousand people,—no more and no less. But if we hold that the world is not a final fact at any moment, that it has a purpose, that that purpose is being constantly worked out, but that the ultimate issues are revealed within the unseen, that the death of the body is not that of the soul, and that all which happens was included in the divine plan,—if we have faith to look at the universe in this way, and to see that it is not to be measured by our little subjective plummet, we shall not despair at the many seeming ills of human life.

*The Spectator.*

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### THE DISINTEGRATION OF CHINA.

A week or two ago Lord Salisbury made a remark which struck readers at the time as a jest, but if so it was a very wise jest. He said the future of China really depended on what happened in a secluded palace and an island in a garden, meaning thereby that it depended on the outcome of the recent Palace Revolution. That is true. There is no hope for China except in the appearance of a strong central Government, which can only be formed by

a strong Emperor, of whose arrival there is at present no visible chance whatever. The supreme authority at present existing is not a Government at all. The Emperor, even if he is not an imbecile, is a prisoner, and the Empress Dowager, whom it is the custom to credit with strength, because she executes those who oppose her, must be at bottom only a weak woman with strong spites. She does literally nothing to defend her enormous Empire.



She opposed successfully the removal of the capital, which would, at all events, have given her dynasty breathing time. She has not picked out one favorite who can govern, she has not raised a single regiment capable of anything but terrorizing the Palace, and she shows no sign of that adroitness which with some weak Sovereigns has proved a compensation for all other defects. Her single idea of a policy is to favor Russia more than any other enemy, and she does not even adhere to that as a consistent line of action. Her Cabinet, or Tsung-li-Yamen, deliberates, or seems to deliberate, but it never comes to any conclusion which affects public action. She does not control her satraps—the viceroys of provinces—so as to make them obey, but only frightens them by occasional executions, guided apparently by nothing better than caprice. She has not called out the latent resources of China, or interested the body of the people in its defence, or even formed a party except among the older mandarins. The consequence is that the disintegration of China, which had begun when she resumed the reins some months ago, is going forward by leaps and bounds. Not a month passes without a telegram stating that some one of her enemies has made a new demand either for territory or for a railway concession, till it really seems as if the whole of her coast would disappear, and as if the Empire were mapped out for partition. Now it is Russia which demands the virtual sovereignty of the splendid province of Manchuria; then Germany, which seizes the great peninsula of Shantung; then France, which asks for concessions in Szechuen; again Italy, which insists that she shall be granted the invaluable port of Sanmum, a most defensible harbor; and lastly Japan, which earmarks the coast opposite the island of Formosa. Even Great Britain has obtained Wei-hai-wel, and a fut-

ure right, whatever it may worth, to the largest and most populous valley in China, which if actually occupied, even by a naval force, would cleave the vast empire in two. Every one of the stations thus seized is avowedly a "base" for further aggressions, and if the process advances for another ten years as fast as it has advanced for the last two, China as we and our fathers have known it will have ceased to exist, and will be replaced by a congeries of feebly governed colonies, probably at war with each other. In the interior rebellion smoulders everywhere, and it is believed that in the west the authority of Pekin is already at an end, while in the south the people, already in insurrection and almost threatening the southern capital, are only waiting for an energetic leader.

It is the custom to say that something must occur either outside or within which will protect China, and the idea is often repeated by men who have lived there long, who cannot believe that the ancient polity they have studied so attentively is breaking up, or rather rotting down, into a heap of refuse, but observers look in vain for a justification of the theory. Precedent is not in its favor. The Roman Empire, which was eaten up like an artichoke, as China is apparently going to be, passed at last entirely out of existence. The Mogul Empire, which was similarly attacked, was divided into kingdoms, was reduced to a single city, and was finally swallowed up by one of its invaders. The Turkish Empire is being eaten up, very slowly it is true, but still is being eaten up province by province. We hear talk every now and then of defending "the integrity and independence of China," of reorganizing its army, and remodelling its finance, but no one actually begins that huge undertaking. No ambassador is supreme at the Palace. The intimate alliance with Japan sometimes dreamed of never

comes off. The great mandarin is never revealed. The rising of Young China, so often prophesied, no more happens than the similar rising of "Young Turkey," also constantly predicted. The "popular movement" which Europe would expect never occurs even in Peking. Even the insurrectionary leaders confine their efforts, as they did in India, to particular provinces, and make no attempt to seize the helm of the supreme Government. The native Chinese Pretenders are as weak as the Manchu dynasty. There is, in fact, no element of reasonable hope in the whole situation, which presents the spectacle of an Empire visibly crumbling away into a gigantic heap of ruins, to be seized, and probably fought for, by any Powers which are actually alive. Even Nepal may yet excite jealousy and alarm in Calcutta by using her brave little fighting men to seize on a big bit of her old suzerain's dominion.

It is, of course, conceivable that if a capable Emperor accidentally reached the throne, he might delay the disintegration of the Empire for a brief space, but not only is his accession improbable, but his success, if he did reach power. Nobody supposes that he could create a fleet, without which he could not re-vindicate his coast, driving off it, it should be remembered, all Europe and Japan; and though the creation of an army is constantly assumed, where is it to come from? Any European Power which formed one would use it almost at once against China, and it is by no means clear that the means of forming a native one actually exist. There may be barbarous tribes within China which will fight,

but why should they assist their oppressors? The Tartar tribes have lost much of their military virtue, or have passed under Russian dominion. The enormous masses of the native population detest fighting, never succeed against any resolute enemy, however small in numbers, and apparently have lost, if they had ever conceived, the idea of active patriotism. The mandarins, who must be employed to organize them, have no conception of vigorous warfare, and, with rare exceptions, cannot resist the opportunities of corruption presented by grants for weapons, commissariat, and military pay. The *morale* of the ruling class has, in fact, disappeared, and even if a new one rose up it would have in it no other elements of strength than the peoples of India possess, or the natives of Africa, with the separate disadvantage that it would have no belief in a creed which teaches fighting as a religious duty. The people of the Empire, in short, appear to be as unequal to the work which must be performed if China is to revive as the rulers themselves, and though they may locally make convulsive efforts, will, in making them, only accelerate the general break up. China is perishing of want of a *morale* which cannot be renewed, and though the process is partly hidden by her enormous bulk and by the fact that the European nations are unusually jealous of each other, it will probably be a very rapid one. If the corpse, so rotten and so vast, does not infect the whole world, that world will be unusually fortunate. The incurable decay of Turkey poisons the politics of the whole of Eastern Europe and Western Asia.

